the BLACKSTONE MAGICIAN

NO. 2

10¢

THIS CALLS FOR ACTION! I'LL STOP THE SHOW AND BE RIGHT WITH YOU, SON!
MISTER BLACKSTONE! YOU'VE GOT TO SAVE MY FATHER! THERE'S NOT A MOMENT TO LOSE! HE'S OUTSIDE IN THE ALLEY, BEING BEATEN UP!
THE KID'S DOIN' HIS JOB WELL!
AS SOON AS BLACKSTONE GOES OUT INTO THAT ALLEY, HE DIES!

Reducing Specialist Says:

LOSE WEIGHT

where it shows most

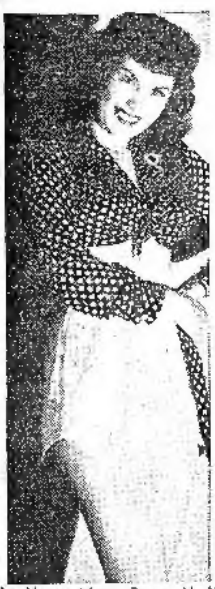
REDUCE

most any part of the body with

SPOT REDUCER

"Thanks to the Spot Reducer, I lost four inches around the hips and three inches around the waistline. It's amazing." Mary Martin, Long Island City, N. Y.

Like a magic wand, the "Spot Reducer" obeys your every wish. Most any part of your body where it is loose and flabby, wherever you have extra weight and inches, the "Spot Reducer" can aid you in acquiring a youthful, slender and graceful figure. The beauty of this scientifically designed Reducer is that the method is so simple and easy, the results quick, sure and harmless. No exercises or strict diets. No steam baths, drugs or laxatives. Thousands have lost weight this way—in hips, abdomen, legs, arms, buttocks, etc. The same method used by many stage, screen and radio personalities and leading reducing salons. The "Spot Reducer" can be used in your spare time in your own room. It breaks down fatty tissues, tones the muscles and flesh, and the increased, awakened blood circulation carries away waste fat. Two weeks after using the "Spot Reducer," look in the mirror and see a more glamorous, better, firmer, slimmer figure that will delight you. You have nothing to lose but weight for the "Spot Reducer" is sold on a money-back guarantee.



Miss Nancy Mace, Bronx, N. Y., says: "I went from size 16 dress to a size 12 with the use of the Spot Reducer. I am glad I used it."

MONEY-BACK GUARANTEE
With a 10-DAY FREE TRIAL

If the "Spot Reducer" doesn't do the wonders for you as it has for others, if you don't lose weight and inches where you want to lose it most, if you're not 100% delighted with the results, your money will be returned at once.

Marie Hammel, New York, N. Y., says: "I used to wear a size 20 dress, now I wear size 14, thanks to the Spot Reducer. It was fun and I enjoyed it."

MAIL COUPON NOW!

FREE

A large size jar of Special Formula Body Massage Cream will be included FREE with your order for the "Spot Reducer."

The "Spot Reducer" Co., Dept. M M-1
871 Broad St., Newark, New Jersey

Send me at once, for $2 cash, check or money order, the "Spot Reducer" and your famous Special Formula Body Massage Cream, postpaid. If I am not 100% satisfied, my money will be refunded.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____

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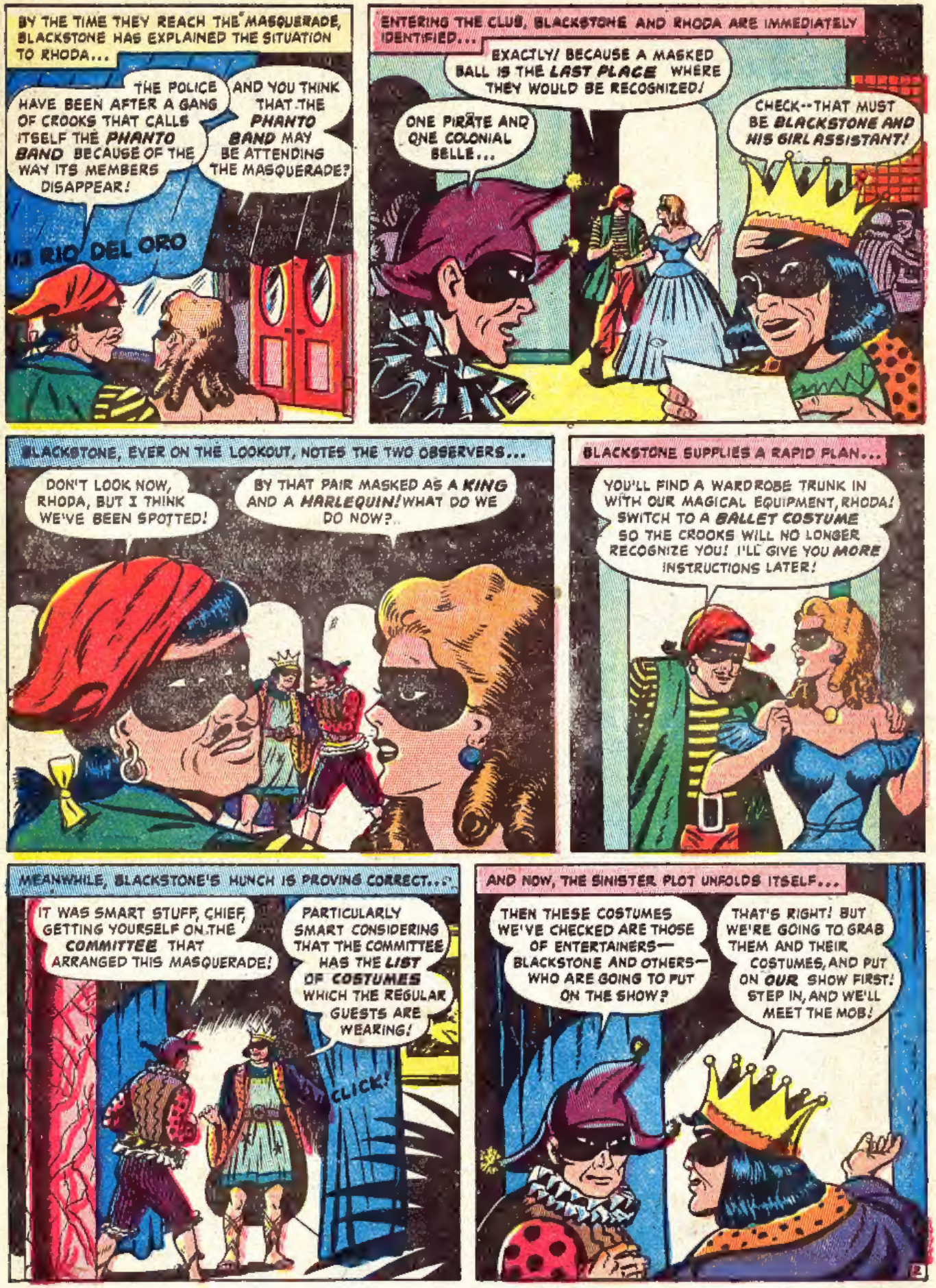
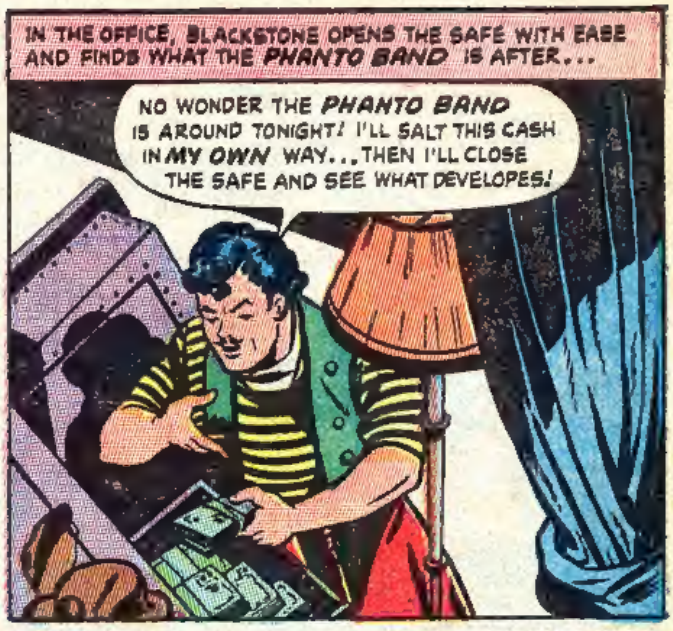
BLACKSTONE the MAGICIAN

A MASQUERADE SETS THE STAGE FOR CRIME! AND CRIMINALS WITH HIDDEN FACES AND HIDDEN MOTIVES GO INTO THEIR ACT OF TREACHERY! BUT INTO THIS DRAMA STEPS BLACKSTONE, THE MASTER MAGICIAN, ATTEMPTING TO UNMASK VILLAINS...
"COSTUMED for CRIME!"
2645

BUT, I DON'T GET IT! YOU SAID YOU WERE GIVING A SHOW TONIGHT! INSTEAD, WE'RE GOING TO A FANCY-DRESS BALL!
THE BALL COMES FIRST, AND THE SHOW FOLLOWS! PUT ON YOUR WIG AND MASK, RHODA, AND I'LL TELL YOU ALL ABOUT IT ON THE WAY TO THE CLUB RIO DEL ORO!

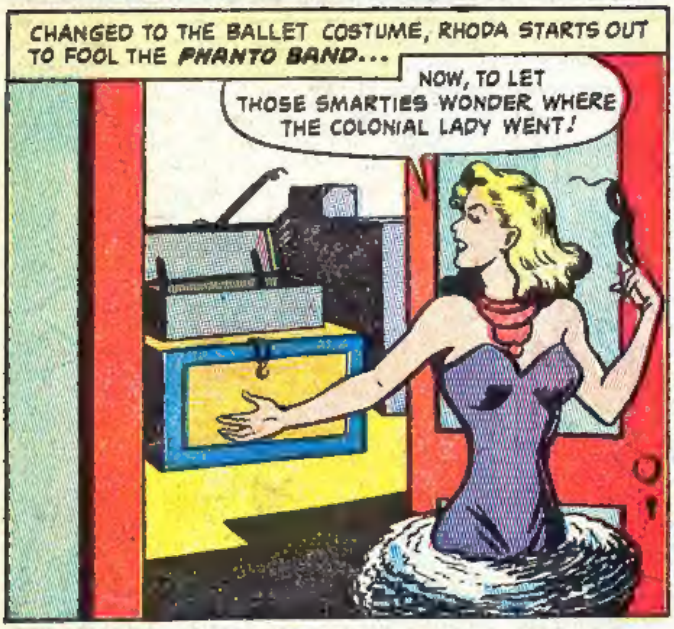

BY THE TIME THEY REACH THE MASQUERADE, BLACKSTONE HAS EXPLAINED THE SITUATION TO RHODA...
THE POLICE HAVE BEEN AFTER A GANG OF CROOKS THAT CALLS ITSELF THE PHANTO BAND BECAUSE OF THE WAY ITS MEMBERS DISAPPEAR!
AND YOU THINK THAT THE PHANTO BAND MAY BE ATTENDING THE MASQUERADE?
RIO DEL ORO
ENTERING THE CLUB, BLACKSTONE AND RHODA ARE IMMEDIATELY IDENTIFIED...
EXACTLY! BECAUSE A MASKED BALL IS THE LAST PLACE WHERE THEY WOULD BE RECOGNIZED!
ONE PIRATE AND ONE COLONIAL BELLE...
CHECK--THAT MUST BE BLACKSTONE AND HIS GIRL ASSISTANT!
BLACKSTONE, EVER ON THE LOOKOUT, NOTES THE TWO OBSERVERS...
DON'T LOOK NOW, RHODA, BUT I THINK WE'VE BEEN SPOTTED!
BY THAT PAIR MASKED AS A KING AND A HARLEQUIN! WHAT DO WE DO NOW?
BLACKSTONE SUPPLIES A RAPID PLAN...
YOU'LL FIND A WARDROBE TRUNK IN WITH OUR MAGICAL EQUIPMENT, RHODA! SWITCH TO A BALLET COSTUME SO THE CROOKS WILL NO LONGER RECOGNIZE YOU! I'LL GIVE YOU MORE INSTRUCTIONS LATER!
MEANWHILE, BLACKSTONE'S HUNCH IS PROVING CORRECT...
IT WAS SMART STUFF, CHIEF, GETTING YOURSELF ON THE COMMITTEE THAT ARRANGED THIS MASQUERADE!
PARTICULARLY SMART CONSIDERING THAT THE COMMITTEE HAS THE LIST OF COSTUMES WHICH THE REGULAR GUESTS ARE WEARING!
CLICK!
AND NOW, THE SINISTER PLOT UNFOLDS ITSELF...
THEN THESE COSTUMES WE'VE CHECKED ARE THOSE OF ENTERTAINERS— BLACKSTONE AND OTHERS— WHO ARE GOING TO PUT ON THE SHOW?
THAT'S RIGHT! BUT WE'RE GOING TO GRAB THEM AND THEIR COSTUMES, AND PUT ON OUR SHOW FIRST! STEP IN, AND WE'LL MEET THE MOB!
2

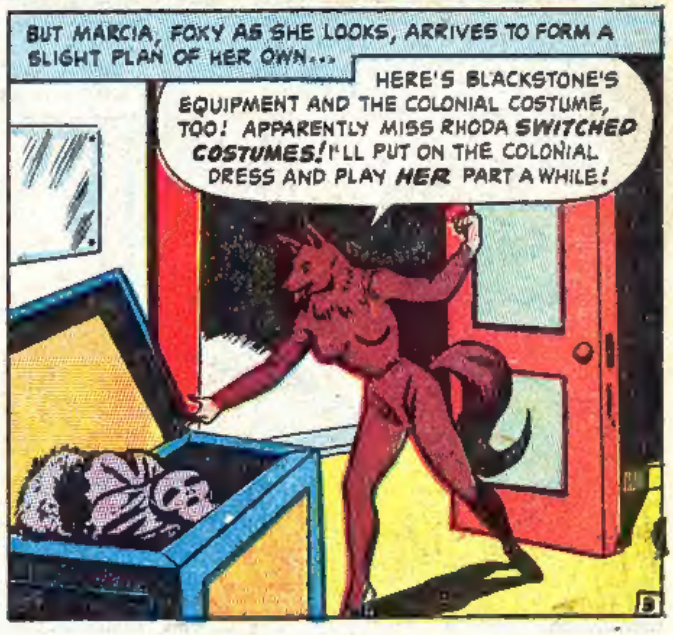
RETURNING, BLACKSTONE IS TOO LATE TO SEE THE CROOKS USE THEIR SECRET EXIT...
FROM THE SUDDEN WAY THAT KING AND HARLEQUIN STEPPED OUT OF SIGHT, THEY MUST BELONG TO THE PHANTO BAND! WELL, THAT GIVES ME TIME TO TRANSACT SOME BUSINESS IN THE CLUB OFFICE!


IN THE OFFICE, BLACKSTONE OPENS THE SAFE WITH EASE AND FINDS WHAT THE PHANTO BAND IS AFTER...
NO WONDER THE PHANTO BAND IS AROUND TONIGHT! I'LL SALT THIS CASH IN MY OWN WAY...THEN I'LL CLOSE THE SAFE AND SEE WHAT DEVELOPES!

THE PHANTO BAND TAKES ITS INSTRUCTIONS AND MOVES TO ACTION...
GANG UP ON THE ENTERTAINERS, ONE BY ONE...DUMP THEM IN THE SUB-CELLAR, BUT GET THEIR COSTUMES FIRST! THEN AFTER WE STAGE OUR ROBBERY, THEY WILL BE BLAMED!
LET'S GO!
THIS IS A CINCH!

I HAVE A SPECIAL JOB FOR YOU, MARCIA! RHODA BRENT, WHO ASSISTS BLACKSTONE, IS WEARING A COLONIAL COSTUME...KEEP TRAILING HER TO LEARN IF BLACKSTONE SUSPECTS ANYTHING!
RIGHT... I'LL BE SMART LIKE A FOX!

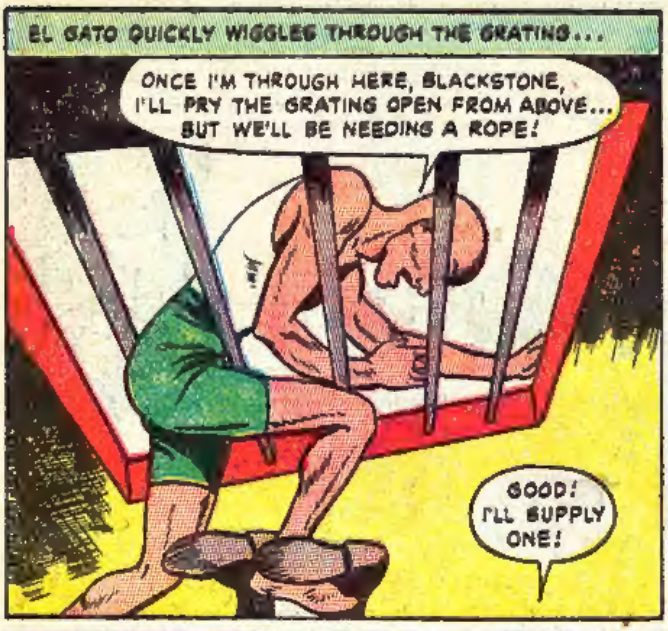

CHANGED TO THE BALLET COSTUME, RHODA STARTS OUT TO FOOL THE PHANTO BAND...
NOW, TO LET THOSE SMARTIES WONDER WHERE THE COLONIAL LADY WENT!


BUT MARCIA, FOXY AS SHE LOOKS, ARRIVES TO FORM A SLIGHT PLAN OF HER OWN...
HERE'S BLACKSTONE'S EQUIPMENT AND THE COLONIAL COSTUME, TOO! APPARENTLY MISS RHODA SWITCHED COSTUMES! I'LL PUT ON THE COLONIAL DRESS AND PLAY HER PART A WHILE!

MEANWHILE, THE PHANTO BAND TAKES QUICK TOLL OF VICTIMS...
NICE WORK!
DRAG HIM OUT!
...AND MAKES QUICK CHANGES INTO THEIR NEW PARTS...
HERE'S ANOTHER!
PEEL HIS COSTUME, AND DROP HIM THROUGH THE CHUTE!
OBSERVING THAT SOMETHING IS AFOOT, BLACKSTONE MEETS RHODA AND TELLS HER TO CHECK...
THERE WERE A LOT OF MEN IN ANIMAL COSTUMES, RHODA, BUT THEY HAVE BEEN DWINDLING MYSTERIOUSLY! IF THEY'RE THE PHANTO BAND, THEY MAY HAVE ME SPOTTED, SO WATCH THEM!
ALL RIGHT... I'LL OPERATE OVER BY THAT BIG MIRROR!
CLICK
RHODA BECOMES FORGETFUL...
I'LL WATCH IN THE MIRROR WHILE I PRETEND TO ADJUST MY COLONIAL WIG... BUT-- WHY I'D FORGOTTEN...
--FORGOTTEN THAT I'M NOT WEARING THE COLONIAL COSTUME ANY LONGER!
I'LL SAY YOU AREN'T!
TAKEN BY SURPRISE, RHODA IS WHIPPED FROM SIGHT...
CLICK!
AND MARCIA STEPS OUT AFTER ANOTHER CLEVER CHANGE...
NOW TO FIND BLACKSTONE, AND TO PROVE THAT EVEN A MAGICIAN CAN BE FOOLED!
4

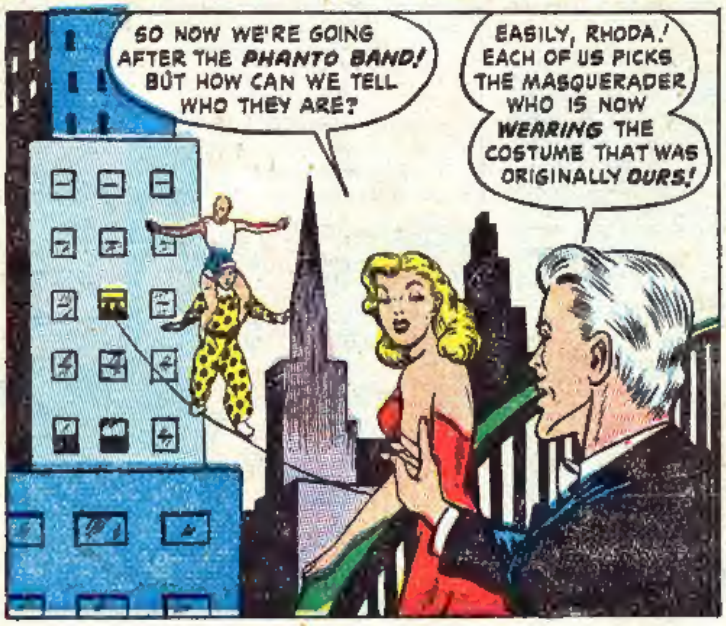
MASKED AS RHODA, MARCIA LURES BLACKSTONE INTO TROUBLE...
THOSE ANIMAL MASKS HAVE CERTAINLY DONE A FADEOUT! I WONDER -- WAIT, THERE'S RHODA, AND SHE'S LEARNED SOMETHING!
NEAT WORK, RHODA!
LOOK WHAT I FOUND! JUST STEP THROUGH -- IT'S PERFECTLY CLEAR BACK THERE!
MEMBERS OF THE PHANTO BAND AMBUSH BLACKSTONE...
HERE'S CAPTAIN KIDD!
YOU MEAN OLD KID BLACKSTONE!
...AND REMOVING HIS COSTUME, SEND HIM TO JOIN THE ENEMY BELOW...
ONLY HE'S KIDDING NOBODY -- BUT HIMSELF!
NOW, WE'RE READY TO STAGE OUR BIG SCALE CRIME!
I'LL PUT ON THE PIRATE OUTFIT!
BLACKSTONE ENDS HIS FLYING TRIP...
IT'S BLACKSTONE!
THE LAST ACT ON THE BILL!
...INTO WHAT APPEARS TO BE AN ABSOLUTE TRAP...
RHODA! HOW DID YOU GET INTO THAT OUTFIT?
THAT GIRL, WHOEVER SHE WAS, WRAPPED ME IN IT WHEN SHE TOOK MY BALLET COSTUME! BUT DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME! HEAR THAT TRAP-DOOR CLAMP? IT'S LOCKED TO STAY!
SNAP!
CLAMP!
8

UP IN THE CLUB RIO DEL ORO, CRIME IS ALREADY UNDERWAY...
YOU TAPPED THAT SAFE EASY, CHIEF!
AS A COMMITTEE MEMBER, I KNEW THE COMBINATION! I'LL STOW THE CASH IN THE CLOAK-ROOM WITH MY COSTUME... THEN I CAN JOIN THE COMMITTEE AND LOOK INNOCENT WHILE YOU TAKE OVER!
...AND NOW, THE MOMENT FOR THE PAY-OFF HAS ARRIVED...
READY, EVERYBODY... THE COMMITTEE IS ABOUT TO JUDGE THE WINNING COSTUMES AND AWARD THE PRIZES!
NOW CRIME APPEARS TO BE THE WINNER, PRIZES AND ALL...
UP WITH THE MITTS!
HAND OVER YOUR DOUGH!
GIVE US THEM SPARKLERS!
CLEVER AS THE CROOKS THINK THEY ARE, BLACKSTONE IS EVEN MORE INGENIOUS...
THE CHUTE IS CLAMPED, BUT THERE'S A GRATING IN THAT CEILING! BUT TO FIND A WAY TO REACH IT, YOU'D HAVE TO BE A MAGICIAN!
AND, I AM A MAGICIAN! WE'LL START THE SHOW WE WERE SUPPOSED TO GIVE AFTER THE MASQUERADE... THE FIRST ACT WILL BE THE RODINI BROTHERS...
THE SHOW IS ON...
...WORLD RENOWNED BALANCERS... NEXT ON THE BILL IS EL GATO, FAMOUS CONTORTIONIST AND SKELETON DANCER!
ALLY!
YUP!
6


EL GATO QUICKLY WIGGLES THROUGH THE GRATING...
ONCE I'M THROUGH HERE, BLACKSTONE, I'LL PRY THE GRATING OPEN FROM ABOVE... BUT WE'LL BE NEEDING A ROPE!
GOOD! I'LL SUPPLY ONE!

BUT ANOTHER UNFORESEEN OBSTACLE INTERVENES...
WE'RE LICKED, BLACKSTONE! THE STEPS ABOVE THE GRATING BROUGHT US TO THIS TOWER, AND THE MAIN SECTION OF THE CLUB RIO DEL ORO IS ACROSS THAT COURTYARD!
BUT I SEE A TELEPHONE WIRE, AND HERE WE HAVE DALANZA, THE COMEDY TIGHT-ROPE WALKER!

As the next performer in this special show, Dalanza carries the entire cast across the single wire onto the building where crime still holds sway...


SO NOW WE'RE GOING AFTER THE PHANTO BAND! BUT HOW CAN WE TELL WHO THEY ARE?
EASILY, RHODA! EACH OF US PICKS THE MASQUERADER WHO IS NOW WEARING THE COSTUME THAT WAS ORIGINALLY OURS!

His plan now complete, Blackstone, the magician-dectective, is ready to spring a surprise attack on the departing criminals...

AND NOW, THE PHANTO BAND FINDS TROUBLE...
GET GOING, GANG, WHILE I GET THE CASH THAT THE CHIEF STASHED HERE!
THAT'S MY COSTUME!
CLOAK ROOM
MORE TROUBLE, AND STILL MORE TROUBLE...
AND... THIS IS MY COSTUME!
THIS WAY, MARCIA!
AND THERE GOES MINE!
WHILE HIS HELPERS MOP UP, BLACKSTONE TAKES ON ANOTHER TASK...
BLACKSTONE, WE, THE COMMITTEE, CONGRATULATE YOU ON THIS RESCUE!
SAVE THE CONGRATULATIONS UNTIL YOU LOOK IN THE OFFICE SAFE!
ROBBERY REVEALED, BLACKSTONE PREPARES TO DISCLOSE THE CULPRIT...
THE MONEY IS GONE, BUT THE PHANTO BAND NEVER ENTERED HERE!
THEN ONE OF YOU IS THE THIEF... I SAW THE MONEY IN THAT SAFE MYSELF AND SPRINKLED IT WITH THIS LUMINOUS POWDER! WHEN I TURN OUT THIS LIGHT---
BLACKSTONE PRESSES THE LIGHT SWITCH...
---THE CROOK'S OWN HANDS WILL SHOW THEMSELVES!
CLICK!
I'LL GET YOU FOR THIS, BLACKSTONE!
LIGHTS ON AGAIN, THE MASTERMIND REVEALED...
QUICK, CHIEF, THIS WAY OUT!
HAVE A CHAIR, MY BAD FELLOW!
LOOK, FAULKNER... IT'S WITHERSPOON, OUR CHAIRMAN!
I WOULDN'T HAVE BELIEVED IT, RAMSDALE!
CLICK
9

MARCIA PROVIDES THE FLEEING RINGLEADERS WITH A CHANCE OPPORTUNITY...
LOOK---HERE ARE SOME GUNS IN BLACKSTONE'S TRUNK!
LET'S HAVE THEM! WE'LL STOP HIM IN HIS TRACKS!
BLACKSTONE IS CONFRONTED WITH HIS OWN GUNS, AND THE CROOKS HAVE DECIDED TO SHOOT TO KILL!
STOP, OR WE'LL SHOOT!
WE'LL SHOOT ANYWAY! BLACKSTONE IS TOO GOOD TO MISS!
UH---JUST CIGARETTES!
WHY---WHY---THIS REVOLVER FELL APART---WHEN I PULLED THE TRIGGER!
HEY---THIS IS A TRICK GUN, TOO!
BANG!
AS A CLIMAX, BLACKSTONE INTRODUCES THE LAW..
YES, ALL TRICK GUNS... BUT HERE ARE SOME REAL ONES IN THE HANDS OF MEN WHO HAVE A RIGHT TO CARRY THEM!
WE HAVE THE REST OF THE MOB... THIS FINISHES THE ROUND-UP!
AND THE PHANTO BAND TAKES THE RIDE THAT IT DESERVES...
WE FOUND THE MONEY FROM THE SAFE IN THE CLOAK ROOM
AND WE RETURNED THE JEWELS TO THEIR OWNERS.
THIS TIME YOU PUT THE VANISH ON THE PHANTO BAND!
AND IT'S ONE I'M THEY'VE VANISHED TO STAY!
POLICE DEPT.
THE END

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Never in the history of magic has an offer like this been made. Only because HARRY BLACKSTONE, Master Magician, the "World's Number One Magi" insisted on it can we give you this

OPPORTUNITY

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BLACKSTONE MAGIC ENTERPRISES, Inc.

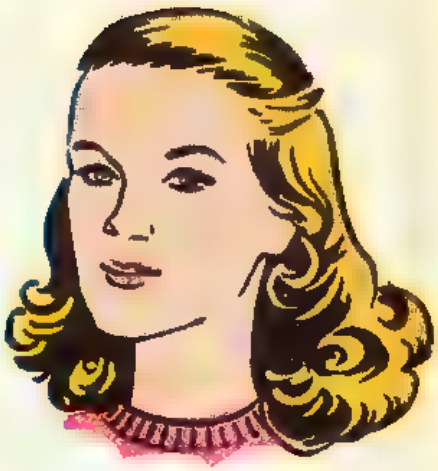
148 LAFAYETTE STREET
NEW YORK 13, N. Y.

ADVICE TO COMIC READERS FOR BAD SKIN

Stop Worrying Now About Pimples, Blackheads And Other Externally Caused Skin Troubles

JUST FOLLOW SKIN DOCTOR'S SIMPLE DIRECTIONS

By *Betty Memphis*

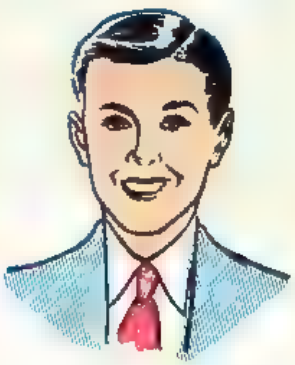


Have you ever stopped to realize that the leading screen stars whom you admire, as well as the beautiful models who have lovely, soft white skin, were all born *just like you* with a lovely smooth skin?

The truth is that many girls and women do not give their skin a chance to show off the natural beauty that lies hidden underneath those externally caused pimples, blackheads and irritations. For almost anyone can have the natural, normal complexion which is in itself beauty. All you have to do is follow a few amazingly simple rules.

Many women shut themselves out of the thrills of life — dates, romance, popularity, social and business success — only because sheer neglect has robbed them of the good looks, poise and feminine self-assurance which could so easily be theirs. Yes, everybody looks at your face. The beautiful complexion, which is yours for the asking, is like a permanent card of admission to all the good things of life that every woman craves. And it really can be yours—take my word for it! — no matter how discouraged you may be this very minute about those externally caused skin miseries.

Medical science gives us the truth about a lovely skin. There are small specks of dust and dirt in the air all the time. When these get into the open pores in your skin, they can in time cause the pores to become larger and more susceptible to dirt particles, dust and infection. These open pores begin to form blackheads which become infected and bring you the humiliation of pimples, blackheads or other blemishes. When you neglect your skin by not giving it the necessary care, you leave yourself wide open to externally caused skin miseries. Yet proper attention with the double Viderm treatment may mean the difference between enjoying the confidence a fine skin gives you or the embarrassment of an ugly, unbeautiful skin that makes you want to hide your face.



The double Viderm treatment is a formula prescribed by a skin doctor with amazing success, and costs you only a few cents daily. This treatment consists of two jars. One contains Viderm Skin Cleanser, a jelly-like formula which penetrates and acts as an antiseptic upon your pores. After you use this special Viderm Skin Cleanser, you simply apply the Viderm Fortified Medicated Skin Cream. You rub this in, leaving an almost invisible protective covering for the surface of your skin.

This double treatment has worked wonders for so many cases of external skin troubles that it may help you, too —*in fact, your money will be refunded if it doesn't.* Use it for only ten days. You have everything to gain and nothing to lose. It is a guaranteed treatment. Enjoy it. Your dream of a clear, smooth complexion may come true in ten days or less.

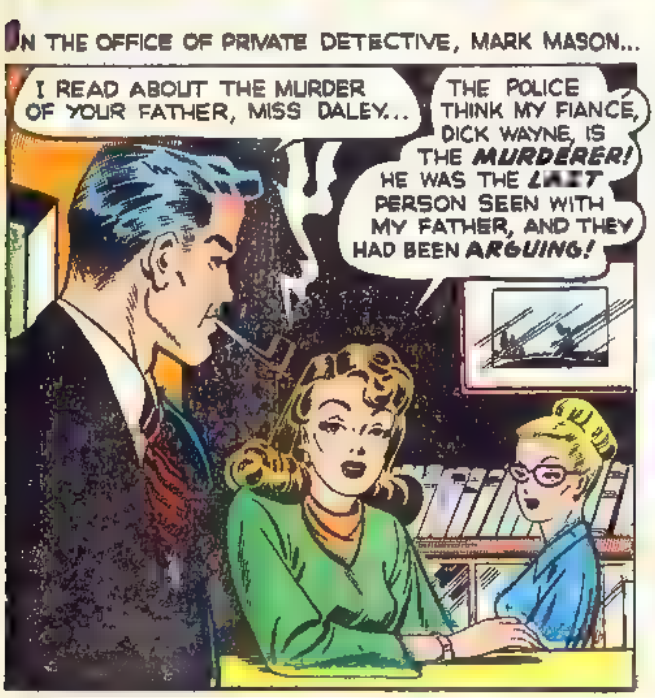
Use your double Viderm treatment every day until your skin is smoother and clearer. Then use it only once a week to remove stale make-up and dirt specks that infect your pores, as well as to aid in healing external irritations. Remember that when you help prevent blackheads, you also help to prevent externally caused skin miseries and pimples.

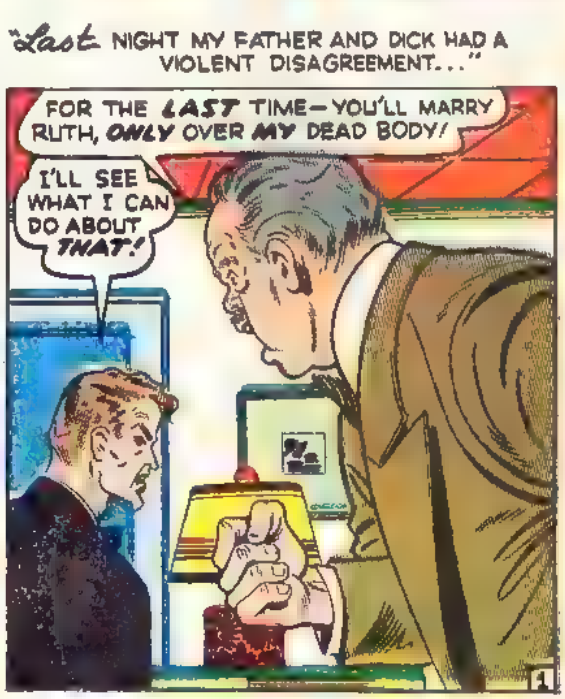
Incidentally, while your two jars and the doctor's directions are on their way to you, be sure to wash your face as often as necessary. First use warm water, then cleanse with water as cold as you can stand it, in order to freshen, stimulate and help close your pores. After you receive everything, read your directions carefully. Then go right to it and let these two fine formulas help your dreams of a beautiful skin come true.

Just mail your name and address to Betty Memphis, care of the New York Skin Laboratory, 206 Division Street, Dept 360 New York 2, N. Y. By return mail you will receive the doctor's directions, and both jars, packed in a safety-sealed carton. On delivery, pay two dollars plus postage. If you wish, you can save the postage fee by mailing the two dollars with your letter. If you are in any way dissatisfied, your money will be cheerfully refunded. To give you an idea of how fully tested and proven the Viderm double treatment is, it may interest you to know that, up to this month, over two hundred and twelve thousand women have ordered it on my recommendation. If you could only see the thousands of happy, grateful letters that have come to me as a result, you would know the joy this simple treatment can bring. And, think of it!— the treatment must work for *you*, or it doesn't cost you a cent.

BLONDE PHANTOM

REGINALD DALEY IS DEAD! THREE PEOPLE COULD HAVE KILLED HIM! THE BLONDE PHANTOM TRIES TO PIECE TOGETHER THE MEAGRE BITS OF EVIDENCE THAT WILL LEAD TO THE GUILTY PARTY AS SHE SEARCHES FOR... "THE RUNAWAY SUSPECT!"


IN THE OFFICE OF PRIVATE DETECTIVE, MARK MASON...
I READ ABOUT THE MURDER OF YOUR FATHER, MISS DALEY...
THE POLICE THINK MY FIANCE, DICK WAYNE, IS THE MURDERER! HE WAS THE LAST PERSON SEEN WITH MY FATHER, AND THEY HAD BEEN ARGUING!


"LAST NIGHT MY FATHER AND DICK HAD A VIOLENT DISAGREEMENT..."
FOR THE LAST TIME—YOU'LL MARRY RUTH, ONLY OVER MY DEAD BODY!
I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO ABOUT THAT!

"TEN MINUTES LATER, WE FOUND FATHER DEAD, AND NO ONE KNEW WHEN DICK HAD LEFT HIM!"
YOU KILLED HIM! I HEARD YOU ARGUING!
DON'T BE A FOOL!
BUT DICK KNEW ALL THE EVIDENCE WOULD POINT TO HIM, SO HE FOOLISHLY RAN AWAY AND HID! AND, OF COURSE, THAT ACT MAKES THE POLICE CERTAIN THAT HE'S THE GUILTY ONE!
Mark
PRIVAT
DETEC
HALF AN HOUR LATER...
HERE'S WHERE THE BLONDE PHANTOM STEPS INTO THE SCENE! I HOPE FOR RUTH'S SAKE HER FIANCÉ IS INNOCENT!
LATER...
I'D LIKE TO ENTER A HOUSE IN THE REGULAR MANNER, JUST ONCE! WELL, NOW I'M IN... I WONDER WHERE I AM EXACTLY?
JUST A LITTLE TRICK I PICKED UP!
OOF!
IF MY DEDUCTIONS ARE CORRECT, YOU'RE DICK WAYNE! WHY DID YOU TRY TO KNOCK ME OUT JUST THEN?
QUITE A COLLECTION OF BOOKS HERE! HEY— WHAT'S THAT!

I WAS HIDING HERE, AND I DIDN'T WANT YOU TO FIND ME!
DON'T YOU KNOW, YOU'RE JUST ESTABLISHING YOUR GUILT IN THE EYES OF THE POLICE, BY HIDING OUT?
I DIDN'T KILL MR. DALEY, BLONDE PHANTOM, BUT THE POLICE WOULDN'T BELIEVE MY STORY! WHEN I LEFT HIM HE WAS STILL RAGING!
I BELIEVE YOU, DICK!
BUT I WANT YOU TO GIVE YOURSELF UP TO THE POLICE! I PROMISE TO HELP YOU ALL I POSSIBLY CAN!
ALL RIGHT, BLONDE PHANTOM! I'LL GO DOWN TO POLICE HEADQUARTERS RIGHT AWAY!
THE BLONDE PHANTOM GOES INTO ACTION...
I'VE LOOKED EVERYWHERE, AND I HAVEN'T FOUND ANYTHING THAT WOULD HELP DICK! SAY! WHAT'S THIS?
SHE'S BEEN CONVERTING THE FAMILY JEWELS INTO CASH TO PAY GAMBLING DEBTS... HMM... VERY INTERESTING!
A FEW MINUTES LATER...
THIS MUST BE HER BEDROOM! NOW, IF I CAN ONLY FIND A LITTLE INCRIMINATING EVIDENCE!
WELL, HERE'S THE MONEY— BUT THIS ALONE, WON'T PROVE ANYTHING! I'VE GOT TO DO BETTER THAN THIS, IF I EXPECT TO SAVE DICK WAYNE FROM THE CHAIR!

AH, THIS IS JUST WHAT I WANT! I.O.U. NOTES WITH HER SIGNATURE ON THEM! I GUESS THIS SHOULD PROVE HER GUILT!
THEN...
I THINK I'VE GOT EVIDENCE HERE TO PROVE DICK WAYNE IS INNOCENT! WILL YOU COME OVER AND BRING HIM WITH YOU?
I TRUST YOUR WORD, BLONDE PHANTOM! MARK MASON AND MISS DALEY ARE HERE! I'LL BRING THEM ALONG, TOO!
LATER...
THE WHOLE THING IS RIDICULOUS! WHAT HAVE WE TO TALK OVER?
IT'S QUITE OBVIOUS THAT DICK WAYNE KILLED REGINALD!
WRONG, MRS. DALEY! YOU KILLED YOUR HUSBAND!
YOU'RE CRAZY!
YOU WERE CONVERTING THE FAMILY JEWELS INTO CASH, TO PAY A LARGE GAMBLING DEBT! BUT YOUR HUSBAND FOUND OUT, AND WAS GOING TO CUT OFF YOUR INCOME! YOU KILLED HIM TO KEEP HIM FROM GOING THROUGH WITH IT!
YOU HEARD DICK ARGUING WITH YOUR HUSBAND AND SAW YOUR CHANCE! YOU KNEW DICK WOULD BE...
YOU'LL NEVER CATCH ME! EVERYONE PUT YOUR HANDS UP!
NOT SO FAST, MRS. DALEY!
OHH!
NICE WORK, BLONDE PHANTOM!
THE NEXT DAY...
WILL YOU THANK THE BLONDE PHANTOM WHEN YOU SEE HER, MR. MASON?
I CERTAINLY WILL!
ALWAYS GLAD TO BE OF SERVICE!
THE END
4

THE MYSTERY WRITER

THERE are many ways of being noticed in a large city high school. You can be a football player, star of the basketball team, hep to jive, or just be yourself. Pat tried everything: no coach wanted him, he couldn't dance, and just being himself brought him nothing. So, Pat decided to do something really spectacular to be noticed. He knew it would have to be that to make Meg Morrow turn her green eyes his way.

His big idea and coup came at the annual rally meeting of the Sophs. They were discussing who to ask as guest of honor and main speaker. Pat got the floor and said in quavering tones, "Why don't we get someone famous this time—like f'rinstance a writer?"

The gang eyed him suspiciously. "Who?" they asked. "What writer would come to Cedarville?"

Pat gulped, thought a moment, and blurted out, "I bet Mary Mason would come. She used to live in Cedarville."

Excitement buzzed through the auditorium. Mary Mason was known all over the country as a top mystery writer. Her books were on all the school lists—in other words she was hep with all high school students. "How do you know she's from Cedarville?" was thrown at him.

"I, I just read about it in a magazine, and anyway I met her last summer." Pat could have bitten off his tongue for the last statement. Creepers, he'd never even seen a picture of Mary Mason. Just as he was going to suggest someone else, Meg slid into a seat beside him. "You're Pat Donley, aren't you?" she purred.

"Y-yes," he answered and before he could say more, he was appointed to make all arrangements for Mary Mason's appearance. He heard Meg ask him to her party after the meeting. "Please come, Pat," she whispered in his right ear. "Most of the gang will be there and we'll have fun."

Pat sure had fun. When he told Meg he couldn't dance, she said to him, "I'm going to teach you, Pat. You've simply got to know how, if . . . if you take me to the rally dance." Pat grinned all evening but as soon as he got home he sat down to write to Mary Mason in care of her publishers. "Dear Miss Mason," he wrote, "We, the Sophs of Cedarville High, think your books are hep. Would you be our guest of honor and speak at our rally? P.S. Through a slip of the tongue, I said I had met you last summer. Do you think we could fix this up a little?"

Two days later a telegram arrived. "Dear Mr. Donley: I'll be glad to speak at your rally stop it will be a homecoming for me stop I'm sure we can fix up the slip of your tongue very easily stop don't meet me stop I'll come straight to your auditorium at 8 o'clock."

Pat let out a shout and waved the yellow slip wildly.

"Pat, please, what's come over you?" his mother asked.

"She's coming! She's coming! Mary Mason will be here," he yipped.

His mother went back to her sewing. "I don't see why you're so excited. No one here in Cedarville knows her. I've asked everyone."

"But Mother, she's the greatest mystery writer of all time — and I'm made!" He bounded out of the house.

Pat was the center of attraction. He wallowed in it and one day ambled over to the library to find a picture of Mary Mason. He didn't want to miss her when she walked in. He searched through every book on famous authors but found nothing. Then he searched for more info on her life. Again a blind alley. All he had was the small magazine article saying she came from Cedarville. It scared

him a little but he was sure he'd know her. Any dope could spot a famous author!

As he flipped through the books in the library, he noticed Miss Webster, the bird-like librarian watching him. And it occurred to him that she might have some information since she was so well read herself. But Miss Webster just fluttered away the minute he mentioned the subject.

Anyway, he could dream. And he did: with elaborate visions of the mysterious Mary Mason. She would be tall, of course, and slim—with velvet black hair and green, soulful eyes. . . .

He called for Meg on the night of the rally. "Has Mary Mason arrived? Have you seen her?" she asked excitedly.

"No, not yet," he answered evasively.

"What hotel is she staying at?" Meg continued. To that, Pat only smiled knowingly.

They were both on committees, so they stayed backstage. Everyone was excited. They watched the stage door and peeked through the curtain. At five minutes to 8:00, they turned to Pat. "What time did she say she'd come?" they questioned.

"Don't worry," he told them with confidence. "She'll be here." He didn't feel so confident when eight o'clock arrived and Mary Mason hadn't. The auditorium was crowded. The town had turned out to see the famous mystery writer from Cedarville.

"Donley," the class president told him at 8:15, "we'll have to start the doings without her."

"She'll come — wait one minute more." Pat's hands were clammy when he saw the dagger-like looks from Meg.

"Too late. We've got to start," the president told him with finality and gave the signal for the curtain to rise. The orchestra went into a fanfare and the high school principal opened the rally.

"Pat Donley," Meg said with tears in her eyes. "You've spoiled our rally. I think you're a fraud—getting all of us excited. Why, I don't believe you ever met Mary Mason!"

"Meg, I . . ." Pat was just going to confess when he saw little Miss Webster, come in the stage entrance. "Oh, hello, Miss Webster," Pat said and turned back to Meg. She was gone! Pat felt as guilty as a criminal. He had misled Meg — misled everyone. Mary Mason was probably teaching him a lesson. She had no intentions of coming. He saw Miss Webster walking towards the stage.

"Hey, Miss Webster," he cried. "The steps to the seats are over here." He ran after her but he was too late. Miss Webster was out on the stage, back of the footlights. Pat felt worse than ever. He was sure off the beam tonight! Couldn't even keep the stage clear. He peeked out. Everyone had their mouths open in surprise. Pat tried to motion Miss Webster off, but she only smiled at him. He was sure she was off her top tonight. Too many books did it, maybe.

"Good evening, Cedarville," Miss Webster started. Pat groaned. "I'm happy to speak to all of you tonight as the guest of honor." A hush fell on the audience. Pat felt beads of perspiration popping out on his forehead. "For years I have been writing mystery stories under the assumed name of Mary Mason."

"Yoweee," Pat wailed. "Now I *am* sunk! What a rummy I've been." He backed into a corner and sat behind some old sets. His goose was cooked but good. He could just hear Meg laughing at him. He'd stay here awhile then go home and sink into mediocracy again. No Meg any more—no dancing lessons—no nothing. He had been a fool! He heard Miss Webster go on and on about how she had started writing, how she hadn't wanted anyone to know who she was. ". . . but it took a clever Sophomore of Cedarville High to ferret me out. Pat Donley is my champion!"

"Pat Donley?" Pat shouted. "That's me!" He jumped up. "I'm saved. Good old Miss Webster." He wiped the perspiration off his forehead and peeked around the set. Meg was looking around wildly for him. He walked up to her nonchalantly.

"Oh, Pat, you old meanie," she said. "You could have told *me*."

"No, I couldn't," he answered. "I . . ."

"Oh, don't tell me, I know just how it happened. She made you keep her secret. Isn't it positively thrilling? And you did it all. Pat," she took his arm, "you're the best keeper of secrets in the whole world."

"Oh, man! I sure am!" Pat answered. "And this one I'm gonna bury—but good!"

THE END

LET'S PLAY DETECTIVE

1825

TELEVISION MURDER!

STARRING DETECTIVE MIKE TRAPP

DETECTIVE MIKE TRAPP AND PEPPER BURNS ATTEND A GUIDED TOUR THROUGH A NEW YORK TELEVISION STUDIO...

...AND UNLIKE RADIO WAVES, TELEVISION WAVES CANNOT FOLLOW THE CONTOUR OF THE EARTH, THUS LIMITING THE DISTANCE OF TELEVISION BROADCASTS TO ABOUT 50 MILES!

WHEN! A SCREAM FROM STUDIO B! IT DOESN'T SOUND AS IF IT'S PART OF THE PROGRAM!

EEEEEEEEEE!

MISS BENNET, OUR LEADING LADY, HAS BEEN SHOT! WE DON'T KNOW WHERE IT CAME FROM!

GET EVERYONE TOGETHER FOR QUESTIONING!

BUT MIKE'S QUESTIONING PROVES FRUITLESS! AND THE FOLLOWING DAY!

MIKE, THERE'S A GUY HERE WHO WANTS TO ASK YOU ABOUT MISS BENNET'S MURDER!

SEND HIM IN!

I'M BURTON LANE! I WAS ENGAGED TO LORNA BENNET! I WAS IN CHICAGO WATCHING HER PERFORM ON A TELEVISION RECEIVER WHEN I SAW WHAT HAPPENED! I TOOK THE NEXT PLANE INTO NEW YORK!

LANE, YOU MURDERED LORNA BENNET! THAT CHICAGO ALIBI WON'T DO!

LATER... YES, I KILLED HER! SHE TOLD ME SHE WAS GOING TO MARRY SOMEONE ELSE AND DIDN'T WANT TO SEE ME ANYMORE! BUT HOW DID YOU KNOW MY ALIBI WAS A PHONY?

YOU SAID YOU WERE IN CHICAGO WATCHING MISS BENNET PERFORM OVER A TELEVISION RECEIVER, BUT WHAT YOU DIDN'T KNOW IS THAT AT THE PRESENT TIME TELEVISION PROGRAMS CAN ONLY BE BROADCAST FOR A RADIUS OF ABOUT 50 MILES!

TURN PAGE UPSIDE DOWN FOR SOLUTION!

STAMP NEWS

"THAT SYLVIA MAKES YOU LAUGH."

By KENT B. STILES

When political independence is achieved by a people, postal paper invariably is issued which reflects such transition. So it is now with Burma, which was a British possession in Asia and which was part of India prior to April of 1937.

Burma's attainment of freedom from Great Britain on Jan. 6, 1948, is accompanied by a definitive series of postal stamps which reflect the circumstances that Burma is now a sovereign nation in its own right.

The Burmese postal administration has selected as the central design of Burma's new stamps a portrait of a man who sacrificed his life in behalf of the people he led – U Aung San, an Army General who was Burma's Premier.

After Britain promised Burma independence, following the defeat of the Japanese who had invaded Burma during World War Two, the Burmese set up what was known as an "Interim Government" to prepare for the day (this Jan. 6) of freedom. U Aung San was chairman of the Executive Council which exercised political control during the interim period, and his title was Prime Minister.

On July 19, 1947, gunmen representing U Aung San's enemies forced their way into the legislative chamber while the executive body was in session at Rangoon, Burma's capital city. The gunmen sprayed the room with bullets, and U Aung San and five other interim leaders were assassinated. So it was logical that the Burmese should, with reverence, place U Aung San's likeness on the first definitive stamps.

U Aung San was born in 1914. When Japanese forces first penetrated Burma he favored their cause for a time but he soon became disillusioned and joined the British as leader of the Burmese National Army, the resistance force against the Japanese.

The definitive stamps bearing U Aung San's portrait replaced a series which had been temporarily in use. That provisional postal group comprises Burma's 1946 stamps (issued while Burma was part of the British Empire) and carrying a portrait of King George VI) overprinted with native characters signifying "Interim Government." Denominations and colors of the stamps in the provisional interim series are 8-pies brown, 6p violet, 9p dull green, 1-anna deep blue, 1½a salmon, 2a carmine, 2a6p greenish blue, 3a blue-violet, 3a6p ultramarine and gray-black, 4a rose-lilac, 8a deep magenta, 1-rupee deep magenta and dark violet, 2r salmon and red-brown, 5r red-brown and dark green, 10r dark violet and carmine.

WE WANT TO GET ACQUAINTED! Send us your name and address and we will mail you a beautiful selection of Pictorial and Commemorative stamps. Write today. SEND NO MONEY!!
EAGLE STAMP CO., 428 Smithfield Street
Dept 22, Pittsburgh 22, Pa.

EXTRA!!! AMAZING U.S. OFFER
SCARCE STAMPS NEARLY 100 YEARS OLD
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Metropolitan Stamp Co. Dept. 61, 140 Nassau St., N.Y. 7

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4118 Clay Ave., Pelham Manor, N. Y.

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including AIRMAILS, PRE-SIDENTIALS, high values, 19th Century, COMMEMORATIVES, coils, revenues, etc. to applicants for our BARGAIN APPROVALS. FREE BIG LISTS included
W. C. BOOKMAN Box 135-E, Maplewood, N. J.

118 DIFFERENT STAMPS
including commemoratives, charities, airmail, surcharges, sets, etc. Only 3c to APPROVAL BUYERS.
BADGER STAMP CO., Dept. M Milwaukee 3, Wis.

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All Different
To Approval Buyers
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Box 34-M Rugby Station, Brooklyn 7, New York

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P. O. Box 44-M G. C. Sta. Brooklyn 24, N. Y.

80 AMERICAN
All different Stamps from North America.
Only 5c to Approval Buyers.
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Packet of WORLDWIDE STAMPS, Package of Hinges, Perforation Gauge and Millimeter Scale, Watermark Detector. Everything 10c to approval buyers
LORRAINE W. BROWN, Dept. 10, Marion, Mich.

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TO APPROVAL BUYERS.
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DIFFERENT STAMPS
TO APPROVAL BUYERS
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204 C Main St., Toledo 5, Ohio

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to approval applicants.
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BARCELON STAMP COMPANY Box 91 CALAIS, MAIN

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BELMONT STAMP CO., Dept. 35, Washington 10, D.C.

CAPTAIN AMERICA

SUB-MARINER COMICS

MARVEL COMICS

FOR THE BEST IN ADVENTURE COMIC READING!

"TOO BIG? ALL RIGHT, SO THEY'RE PEDAL PUSHERS!"

Rhoda in "SLEEPYTIME PAL!"

HER WORK WITH BLACKSTONE FINISHED FOR THE DAY, RHODA PREPARES FOR BED...

HO HUM! GOLLY, I'M *TIRED!* NOW *WHO* WOULD BE CALLING ME AT *THIS* HOUR OF THE NIGHT?

R-RING!

HELLO—RHODA? THIS IS MRS. PRENTISS NEXT DOOR! YOU *MUST* COME OVER RIGHT AWAY... SOMETHING TERRIBLE...

TROUBLE, MRS. PRENTISS? I'LL BE *RIGHT* OVER!

WHAT IS IT, MRS. PRENTISS? IS SOMEBODY...?

OH, *RHODA,* I'M *SO* GLAD YOU CAME OVER! IT'S TERRIBLE... I'VE BEEN WALKING THE FLOOR WITH JUNIOR FOR HOURS, BUT HE *WON'T GO TO SLEEP!*

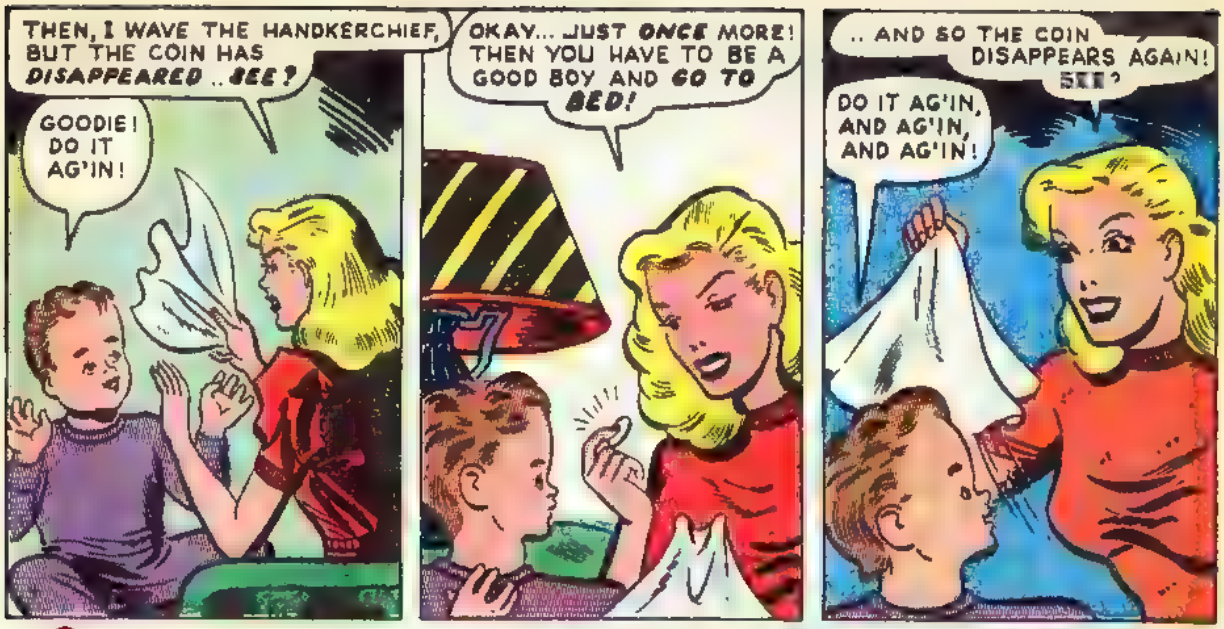
WAHH!

I THOUGHT MAYBE *YOU* COULD DO SOME OF MR. BLACKSTONE'S CLEVER TRICKS TO STOP JUNIOR FROM CRYING, AND THEN MAYBE HE'LL QUIET DOWN AND *GO TO SLEEP!*

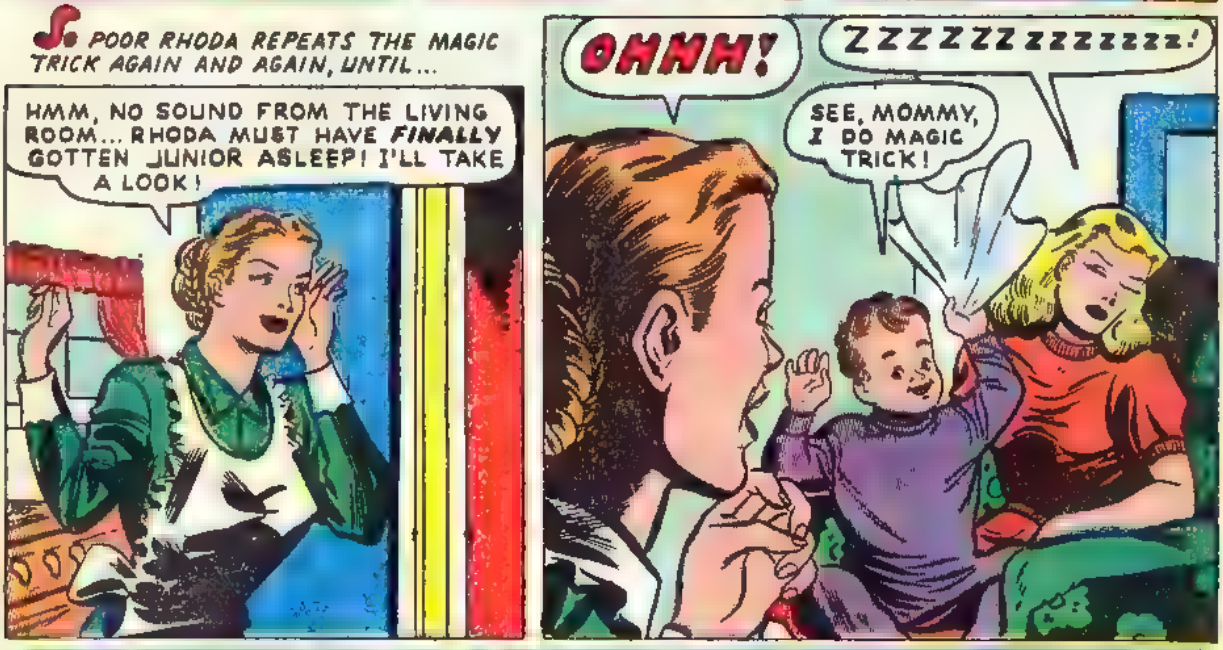
HUH?

OKAY, JUNIOR, WATCH CLOSELY! SEE? I HOLD A *HANDKERCHIEF* IN ONE HAND, AND A *COIN* IN THE OTHER! NOW I'M GOING TO PUT THE COIN IN THE HANDKERCHIEF AND MAKE IT *DISAPPEAR!*

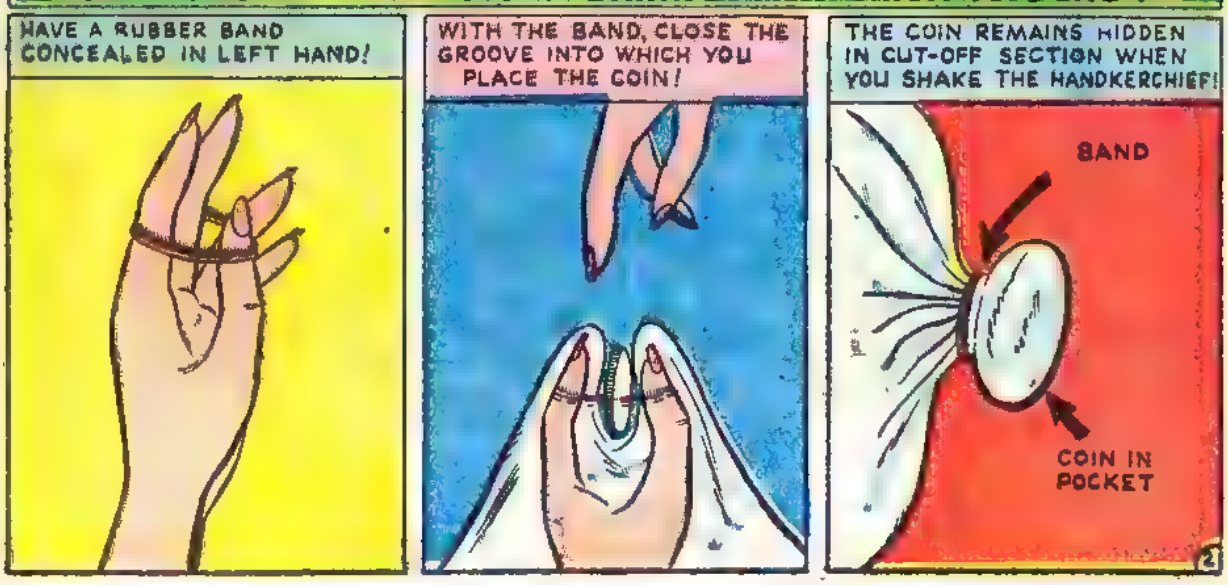
I PLACE THE COIN IN THIS GROOVE IN THE HANDKERCHIEF...


THEN, I WAVE THE HANDKERCHIEF, BUT THE COIN HAS DISAPPEARED .. SEE?
GOODIE! DO IT AG'IN!
OKAY... JUST ONCE MORE! THEN YOU HAVE TO BE A GOOD BOY AND GO TO BED!
.. AND SO THE COIN DISAPPEARS AGAIN! SEE?
DO IT AG'IN, AND AG'IN, AND AG'IN!

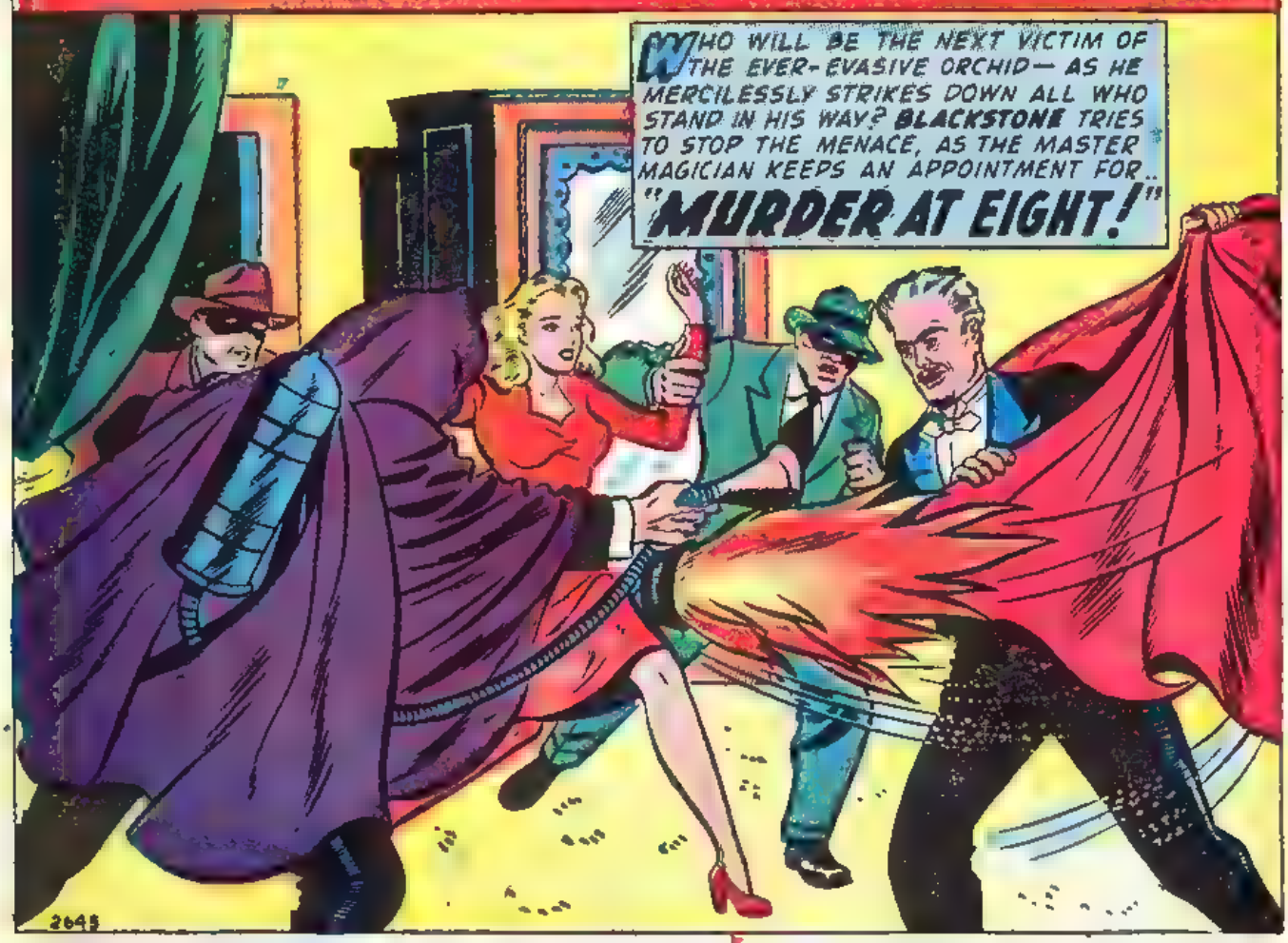
So POOR RHODA REPEATS THE MAGIC TRICK AGAIN AND AGAIN, UNTIL...


HMM, NO SOUND FROM THE LIVING ROOM... RHODA MUST HAVE FINALLY GOTTEN JUNIOR ASLEEP! I'LL TAKE A LOOK!
OHHH!
ZZZZZZzzzzzz!
SEE, MOMMY, I DO MAGIC TRICK!

AND THIS IS HOW THE DISAPPEARING COIN TRICK IS DONE!


HAVE A RUBBER BAND CONCEALED IN LEFT HAND!
WITH THE BAND, CLOSE THE GROOVE INTO WHICH YOU PLACE THE COIN!
THE COIN REMAINS HIDDEN IN CUT-OFF SECTION WHEN YOU SHAKE THE HANDKERCHIEF!
BAND
COIN IN POCKET

BLACKSTONE the MAGICIAN


WHO WILL BE THE NEXT VICTIM OF THE EVER-EVASIVE ORCHID— AS HE MERCILESSLY STRIKES DOWN ALL WHO STAND IN HIS WAY? BLACKSTONE TRIES TO STOP THE MENACE, AS THE MASTER MAGICIAN KEEPS AN APPOINTMENT FOR.. "MURDER AT EIGHT!"
2648

EXPRESS OFFICE ROBBED IN CENTER CITY...

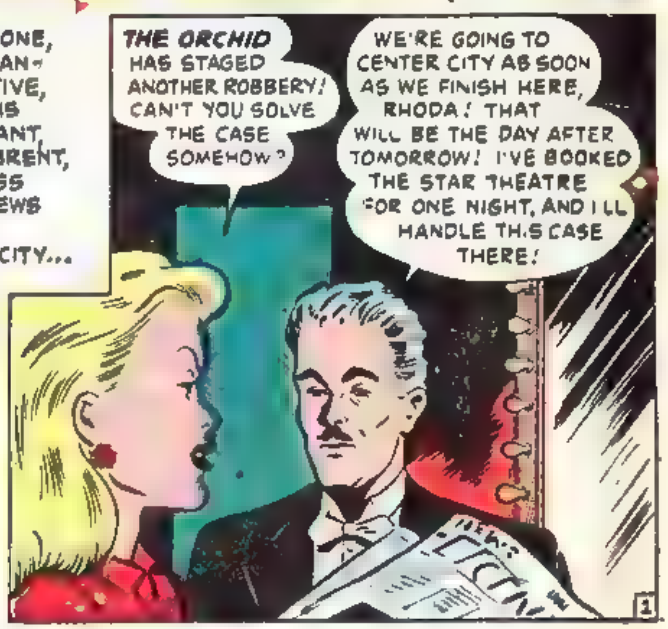
THE ORCHID STRIKES AGAIN IN CENTER CITY...

BULLET-RIDDLED TIME CLOCK STOPPED EXACTLY ON THE HOUR...

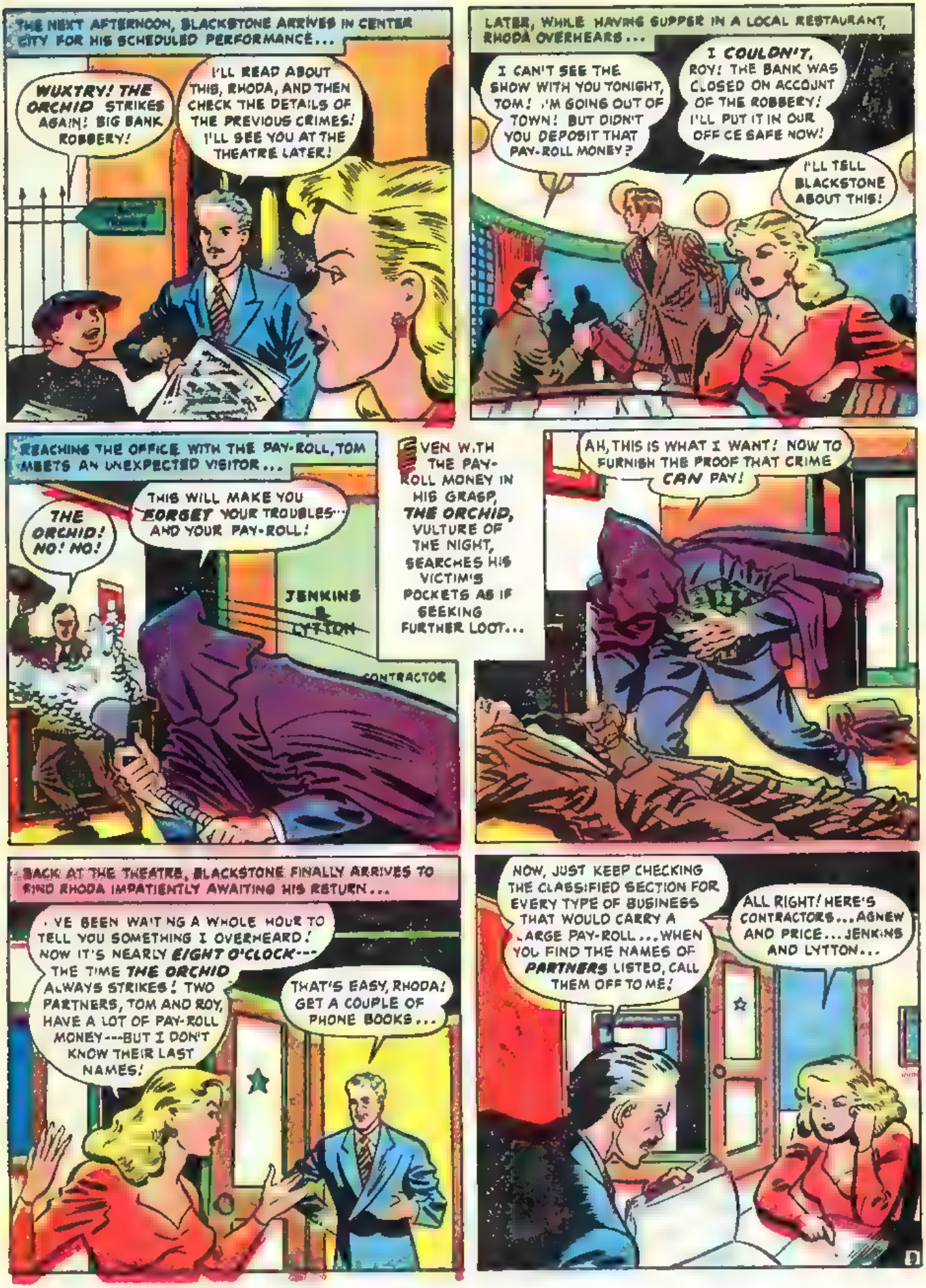
GAS WITH ORCHID ODOR USED TO OVERPOWER VICTIMS...

HOODED FIGURE OF "THE ORCHID" HAUNTS CENTER CITY

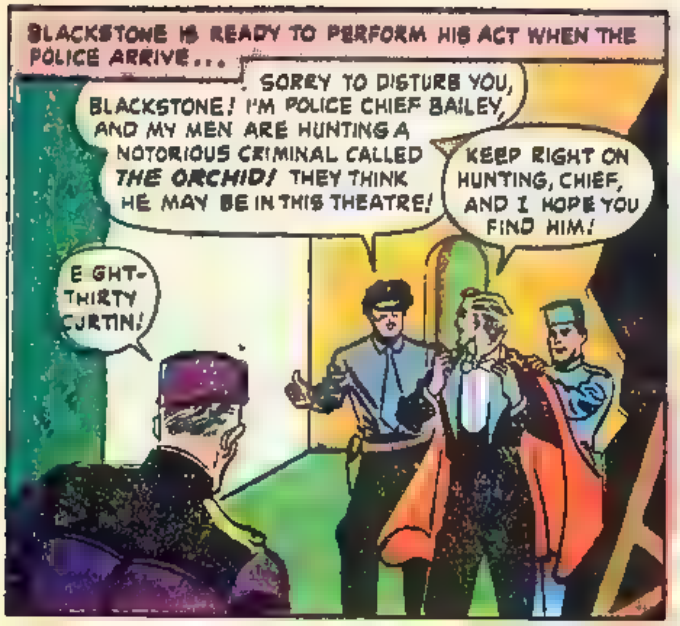
BLACKSTONE, MAGICIAN-DETECTIVE, AND HIS ASSISTANT, RHODA BRENT, DISCUSS CRIME NEWS FROM CENTER CITY...

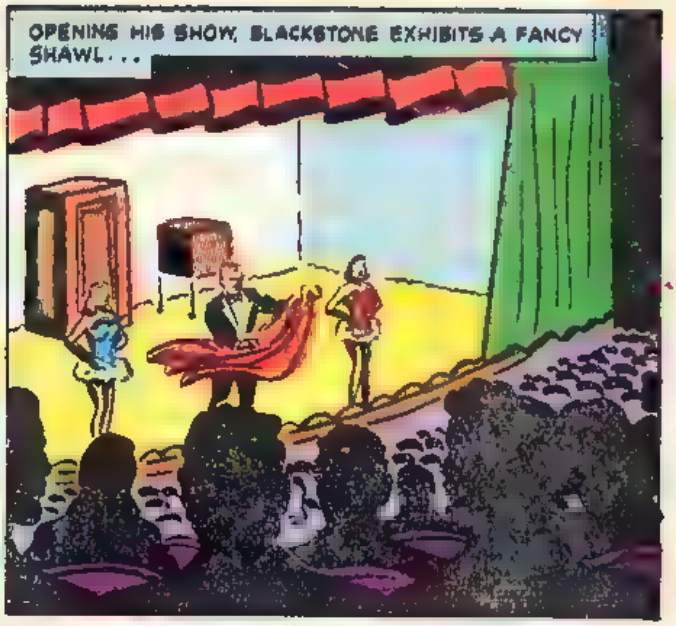

THE ORCHID HAS STAGED ANOTHER ROBBERY! CAN'T YOU SOLVE THE CASE SOMEHOW?
WE'RE GOING TO CENTER CITY AS SOON AS WE FINISH HERE, RHODA! THAT WILL BE THE DAY AFTER TOMORROW! I'VE BOOKED THE STAR THEATRE FOR ONE NIGHT, AND I'LL HANDLE THIS CASE THERE!
1

THAT EVENING AT THE CENTER CITY BANK AND TRUST COMPANY, THE WATCHMAN HEARS A SUSPICIOUS SOUND...
HEY--WHAT'S THAT? WHO'S THERE?
CREEAAKK!
FROM THEIR HIDING PLACE WITHIN THE BANK VAULT, MASKED MARAUDERS SURGE TO CRIME!
WE'VE GOT MOST OF THE DOUGH ALREADY, CHIEF!
THAT SETTLES HIM! I'LL FIX THE ALARM SYSTEM WHILE YOU GATHER ANY OTHER MONEY YOU CAN FIND!
CREAK!
THE ORCHID! AGGHH!
THE ORCHID ATTACHES A SPECIAL FUSE TO THE ALARM SYSTEM..
FFFT-T!
OKAY, LET'S SCRAM! WHEN THAT ALARM GOES OFF, NO ONE WILL SUSPECT THAT THE ROBBERY STARTED AS AN INSIDE JOB!
AND THE WATCHMAN WON'T REMEMBER A THING, BOSS, AFTER THE WAY YOU GASSED HIM!
WE'VE GOT PLENTY OF TIME FOR OUR GETAWAY, TOO!
CENTER CITY BANK AND TRUST COMPANY
WHEN THE BURNING FUSE MELTS THE WIRE, THE ALARM IS SOUNDED...
CLLAANNGG!
CLLAANNGG!
FFFT-T!
THE NEWS REACHES THE MANSION OF RUFUS GRENDLE, CENTER CITY'S WEALTHIEST CITIZEN...
IT'S THE POLICE CHIEF, SIR! HE SAYS THE ORCHID HAS ROBBED THE BANK!
TELL MY GUESTS I'LL BE LATE FOR DINNER, MARTIN! I'LL GO TO THE BANK AT ONCE!
DINNER IS SERVED!
RUFUS ALWAYS SERVES DINNER EXACTLY AT EIGHT O'CLOCK!
LATER, AT POLICE HEADQUARTERS...
I--I CAN'T REMEMBER HOW--WHEN--WHERE--
THE ORCHID'S WORK!
YOU'RE RIGHT, MR. GRENDLE! THE ALARM WENT OFF AT EIGHT O'CLOCK, AND THE ORCHID ALWAYS STRIKES AT EIGHT!
CHIEF BAILEY
8

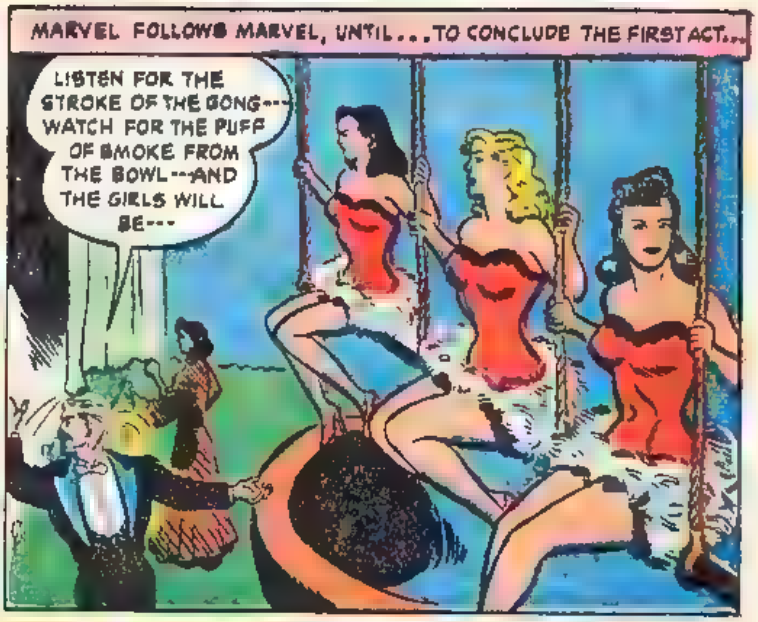

THE NEXT AFTERNOON, BLACKSTONE ARRIVES IN CENTER CITY FOR HIS SCHEDULED PERFORMANCE...
WUXTRY! THE ORCHID STRIKES AGAIN! BIG BANK ROBBERY!
I'LL READ ABOUT THIS, RHODA, AND THEN CHECK THE DETAILS OF THE PREVIOUS CRIMES! I'LL SEE YOU AT THE THEATRE LATER!
LATER, WHILE HAVING SUPPER IN A LOCAL RESTAURANT, RHODA OVERHEARS...
I CAN'T SEE THE SHOW WITH YOU TONIGHT, TOM! I'M GOING OUT OF TOWN! BUT DIDN'T YOU DEPOSIT THAT PAY-ROLL MONEY?
I COULDN'T, ROY! THE BANK WAS CLOSED ON ACCOUNT OF THE ROBBERY! I'LL PUT IT IN OUR OFFICE SAFE NOW!
I'LL TELL BLACKSTONE ABOUT THIS!
REACHING THE OFFICE WITH THE PAY-ROLL, TOM MEETS AN UNEXPECTED VISITOR...
THIS WILL MAKE YOU FORGET YOUR TROUBLES... AND YOUR PAY-ROLL!
THE ORCHID! NO! NO!
JENKINS & LYTTON
CONTRACTOR
EVEN WITH THE PAY-ROLL MONEY IN HIS GRASP, THE ORCHID, VULTURE OF THE NIGHT, SEARCHES HIS VICTIM'S POCKETS AS IF SEEKING FURTHER LOOT...
AH, THIS IS WHAT I WANT! NOW TO FURNISH THE PROOF THAT CRIME CAN PAY!
BACK AT THE THEATRE, BLACKSTONE FINALLY ARRIVES TO FIND RHODA IMPATIENTLY AWAITING HIS RETURN...
I'VE BEEN WAITING A WHOLE HOUR TO TELL YOU SOMETHING I OVERHEARD! NOW IT'S NEARLY EIGHT O'CLOCK--- THE TIME THE ORCHID ALWAYS STRIKES! TWO PARTNERS, TOM AND ROY, HAVE A LOT OF PAY-ROLL MONEY---BUT I DON'T KNOW THEIR LAST NAMES!
THAT'S EASY, RHODA! GET A COUPLE OF PHONE BOOKS...
NOW, JUST KEEP CHECKING THE CLASSIFIED SECTION FOR EVERY TYPE OF BUSINESS THAT WOULD CARRY A LARGE PAY-ROLL... WHEN YOU FIND THE NAMES OF PARTNERS LISTED, CALL THEM OFF TO ME!
ALL RIGHT! HERE'S CONTRACTORS... AGNEW AND PRICE... JENKINS AND LYTTON...

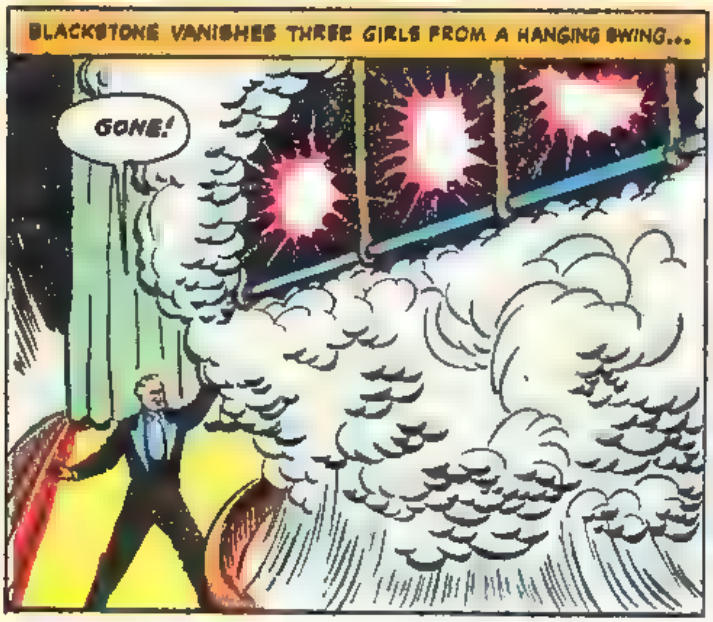
BLACKSTONE DISCOVERS THE SCENE OF CRIME, NOT KNOWING HE IS TOO LATE...
THAT'S IT! THERE'S A TOM JENKINS AND A ROY LYTTON, BOTH WITH THE SAME BUSINESS ADDRESS--- 305 HIGH STREET! I'M GOING OVER THERE!
THAT ADDRESS CHECKS...BUT DON'T FORGET YOUR SHOW STARTS AT EIGHT-THIRTY! YOU'D BETTER BE BACK!
RACING TO THE ADDRESS ON HIGH STREET, BLACKSTONE FINDS JENKINS RECOVERED FROM THE GAS...
P'LICE---TOM JENKINS CALLING--- BEEN ROBBED--- P'LICE---
TAKE IT EASY, JENKINS! I'LL DO WHAT I CAN TO HELP YOU!
CLICK! CLICK!
NOT REALIZING THAT JENKINS HAS BEEN CALLING THE POLICE FOR AT LEAST TEN MINUTES, BLACKSTONE IS CONFRONTED BY THE ARRIVING LAW...
P'LICE--- HELP--- P'LICE---
THERE'S JENKINS... AND THAT MUST BE THE ORCHID WITH HIM!
DROP THAT VICTIM, ORCHID, OR WE'LL SHOOT TO KILL!
FLINGING JENKINS INTO THE ARMS OF THE POLICE, BLACKSTONE MAKES A RAPID EXIT...
HOLD THE VICTIM, YOURSELVES, OFFICERS...I HAVE BUSINESS ELSEWHERE!
BANG! BANG!
HA! LUCK'S WITH ME! I COULDN'T ASK FOR BETTER SERVICE!
CENTER CITY SUPPLY SERVICE PROMPT DELIVERY
THE FREE RIDE CARRIES THE MAGICIAN RIGHT TO HIS DESTINATION...
AND, AS FOR PROMPT DELIVERY, THIS IS IT! NOW TO GET INTO MY DRESS SUIT BEFORE THE POLICE BEGIN MAKING MORE MISTAKES!
STAR THEATRE STAGE ENTRANCE
4

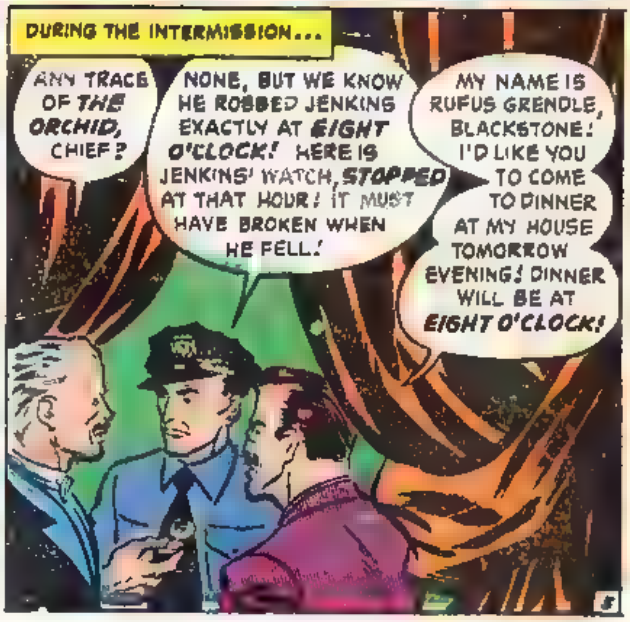

BLACKSTONE IS READY TO PERFORM HIS ACT WHEN THE POLICE ARRIVE...
SORRY TO DISTURB YOU, BLACKSTONE! I'M POLICE CHIEF BAILEY, AND MY MEN ARE HUNTING A NOTORIOUS CRIMINAL CALLED THE ORCHID! THEY THINK HE MAY BE IN THIS THEATRE!
KEEP RIGHT ON HUNTING, CHIEF, AND I HOPE YOU FIND HIM!
E GHT-THIRTY CURTIN!

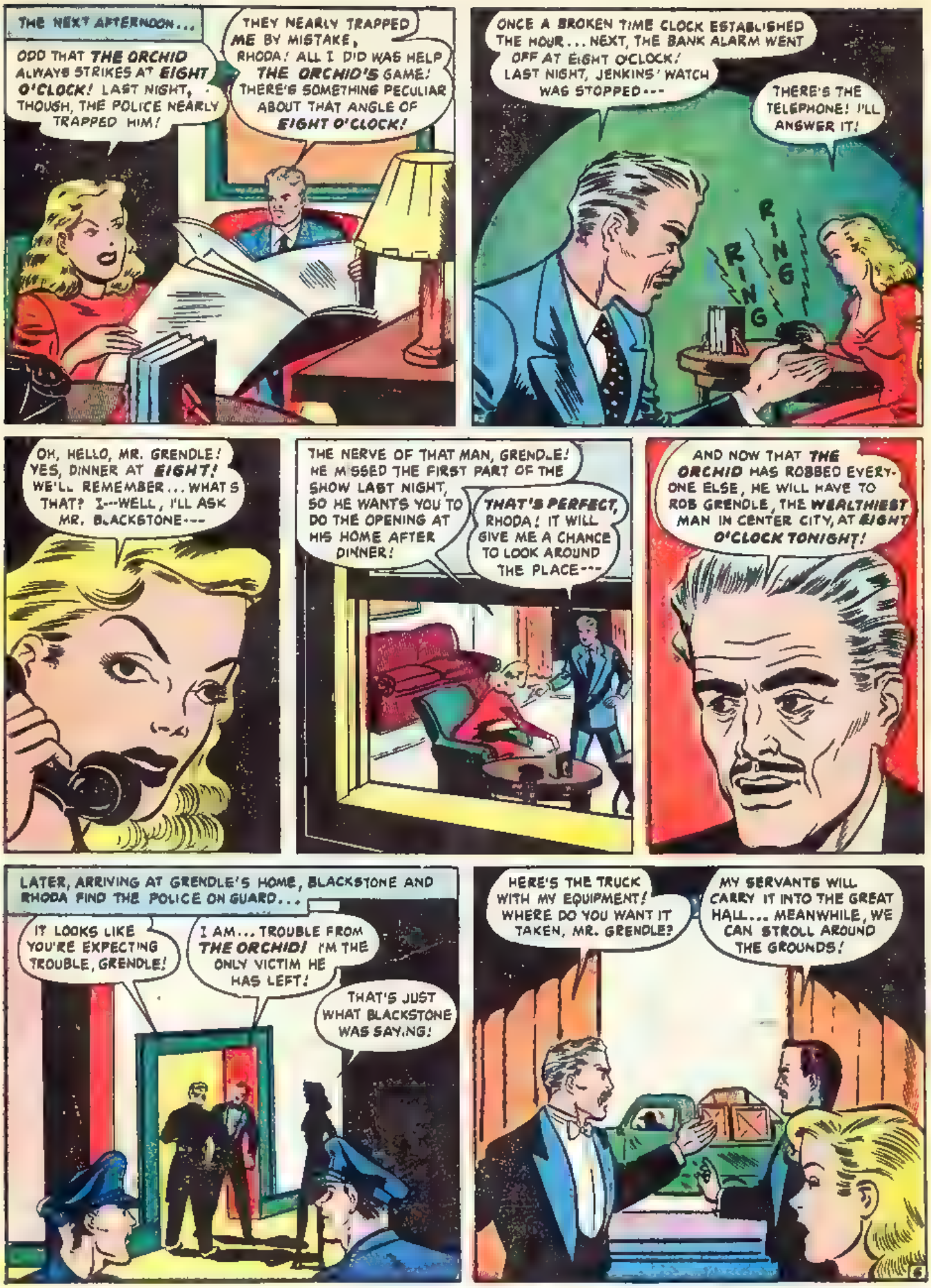

OPENING HIS SHOW, BLACKSTONE EXHIBITS A FANCY SHAWL...

...AND FROM IT PRODUCES A HUGE BOWL OF FIRE...
WHY DIDN'T THE POLICE RUN INTO YOU WHILE THEY WERE LOOKING FOR THE ORCHID?
I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT THAT LATER, RHODA!


MARVEL FOLLOWS MARVEL, UNTIL...TO CONCLUDE THE FIRST ACT...
LISTEN FOR THE STROKE OF THE GONG--- WATCH FOR THE PUFF OF SMOKE FROM THE BOWL---AND THE GIRLS WILL BE---


BLACKSTONE VANISHES THREE GIRLS FROM A HANGING SWING...
GONE!


DURING THE INTERMISSION...
ANY TRACE OF THE ORCHID, CHIEF?
NONE, BUT WE KNOW HE ROBBED JENKINS EXACTLY AT EIGHT O'CLOCK! HERE IS JENKINS' WATCH, STOPPED AT THAT HOUR! IT MUST HAVE BROKEN WHEN HE FELL!
MY NAME IS RUFUS GRENDLE, BLACKSTONE! I'D LIKE YOU TO COME TO DINNER AT MY HOUSE TOMORROW EVENING! DINNER WILL BE AT EIGHT O'CLOCK!


THE NEXT AFTERNOON...
ODD THAT THE ORCHID ALWAYS STRIKES AT EIGHT O'CLOCK! LAST NIGHT, THOUGH, THE POLICE NEARLY TRAPPED HIM!
THEY NEARLY TRAPPED ME BY MISTAKE, RHODA! ALL I DID WAS HELP THE ORCHID'S GAME! THERE'S SOMETHING PECULIAR ABOUT THAT ANGLE OF EIGHT O'CLOCK!
ONCE A BROKEN TIME CLOCK ESTABLISHED THE HOUR... NEXT, THE BANK ALARM WENT OFF AT EIGHT O'CLOCK! LAST NIGHT, JENKINS' WATCH WAS STOPPED---
THERE'S THE TELEPHONE! I'LL ANSWER IT!
RING
RING
OH, HELLO, MR. GRENDLE! YES, DINNER AT EIGHT! WE'LL REMEMBER... WHAT'S THAT? I---WELL, I'LL ASK MR. BLACKSTONE---
THE NERVE OF THAT MAN, GRENDLE! HE MISSED THE FIRST PART OF THE SHOW LAST NIGHT, SO HE WANTS YOU TO DO THE OPENING AT HIS HOME AFTER DINNER!
THAT'S PERFECT, RHODA! IT WILL GIVE ME A CHANCE TO LOOK AROUND THE PLACE---
AND NOW THAT THE ORCHID HAS ROBBED EVERYONE ELSE, HE WILL HAVE TO ROB GRENDLE, THE WEALTHIEST MAN IN CENTER CITY, AT EIGHT O'CLOCK TONIGHT!
LATER, ARRIVING AT GRENDLE'S HOME, BLACKSTONE AND RHODA FIND THE POLICE ON GUARD...
IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE EXPECTING TROUBLE, GRENDLE!
I AM... TROUBLE FROM THE ORCHID! I'M THE ONLY VICTIM HE HAS LEFT!
THAT'S JUST WHAT BLACKSTONE WAS SAYING!
HERE'S THE TRUCK WITH MY EQUIPMENT! WHERE DO YOU WANT IT TAKEN, MR. GRENDLE?
MY SERVANTS WILL CARRY IT INTO THE GREAT HALL... MEANWHILE, WE CAN STROLL AROUND THE GROUNDS!
6

AS DUSK SETTLES OVER GRENDLE'S ESTATE...
MY, WHAT BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS YOU HAVE, MR. GRENDLE!
PICK SOME IF YOU WISH! THEN IT WILL BE TIME TO COME INDOORS... MEANWHILE, I'LL LOOK FOR BLACKSTONE: HE MUST HAVE STOLLED AWAY SOMEWHERE!
ENTERING THE MANSION, RHODA ARRIVES IN THE GREAT HALL...
WELL, HERE'S EVERYTHING ALL READY, AND IT'S STILL AN HOUR BEFORE DINNER... IT'S ONLY SEVEN O CLOCK!
DONG-DONG
BUT THAT CLOCK JUST STRUCK EIGHT, AND IT SAYS EIGHT!
DONG!
BEFORE RHODA CAN GUESS WHO SET THE CLOCK AHEAD, THE ANSWER CRASHES HOME...
THE ORCHID WITH HIS GAS GUN! I'LL GET INTO THAT EMPTY CABINET!
OH, NO, YOU WON'T--- NOT YET!
SLAM!
RHODA'S TEMPORARY ESCAPE HALTED, MASKED MEN COMPLETE HER CAPTURE...
FIRST, YOU CAN TRY THIS ORCHID GAS WHICH WILL MAKE YOU FORGET EVERYTHING--- INCLUDING THE TIME IT HAPPENED! THEN WE WILL PUT YOU IN THE EMPTY CABINET!
BEFORE THE ORCHID CAN CARRY OUT HIS THREAT, BLACKSTONE'S MAGIC INTERVENES...
BLACKSTONE--- OUT OF NOWHERE!
WHO TOLD YOU THIS CABINET WAS EMPTY?
17

THAT SILLY SHAWL WON'T STOP ME, BLACKSTONE!
THE SHAWL WON'T, BUT THIS FIRE-BOWL WILL!
MEETING THE GAS, THE FIRE INSTANTLY IGNITES IT, BLOWING THE ORCHID SENSELESS...
POW!
AS THE MASKED MEN SURGE FOR BLACKSTONE, HE SEIZES THE FLIMSIEST OF SHIELDS···A FOLDING SCREEN...
GET HIM AND QUICK!
YOU STAY PUT!
COME FROM BEHIND THERE, BLACKSTONE!
WE'LL DO MORE THAN CLOUT YOU IF YOU DON'T!
B
B
BUT AGAIN, BLACKSTONE'S MAGIC IS WORKING A SWIFT TRANSPOSITION WHICH FORMS A FEATURE OF HIS SHOW...
THAT SCREEN AND CABINET ILLUSION IS CERTAINLY A NIFTY!
GONE!
WHERE?
CRIME'S LAST ACT CLOSES WITH A PERFECT CLIMAX...
HERE!

HEARING THE EXPLOSION AND THE COMMOTION, THE POLICE ARRIVE FROM OUTDOORS...
HERE'S AN ORCHID FOR YOU, CHIEF--TO BE SPECIFIC, THE ORCHID!
CRIME'S MASTER IS UNMASKED...
WHY... IT'S GRENDLE!
CERTAINLY...WHO ELSE WOULD IT BE?
AND THOSE TWO ARE GRENDLE'S SECRETARY AND FOOTMAN, WHO HELPED HIM IN ALL HIS CRIMES!
YOU'RE RIGHT, BLACKSTONE! BUT HOW DID YOU GUESS ALL THIS?
ALWAYS, THE EVIDENCE POINTED TO CRIME AT EIGHT O'CLOCK! BUT THE TIME CLOCK COULD HAVE BEEN SET BEFORE IT WAS SMASHED! THE BANK ALARM COULD HAVE BEEN SET OFF BY A ONE-HOUR FUSE! THE ORCHID COULD HAVE SET JENKINS' WATCH ONE HOUR AHEAD AND THEN BROKEN IT!
THAT'S JUST WHAT GRENDLE DID WITH HIS OWN CLOCK TONIGHT!
GRENDLE ALWAYS DINED AT EIGHT O'CLOCK BECAUSE THAT GAVE HIM A PERFECT ALIBI FOR THE CRIMES HE DID EARLIER... BUT SINCE THE ORCHID WOULD STOP AT NOTHING, GRENDLE HAD TO MAKE IT LOOK AS THOUGH THE ORCHID HAD COME HERE TOO! THAT'S WHAT PUT HIM TO THAT TEST TONIGHT!
AND BOTH GRENDLE AND THE ORCHID FAILED!
I'M TAKING GRENDLE! BRING THE OTHERS ALONG, MEN!
AN ORCHID FOR YOU, MR. ORCHID
NICE THOUGHT, RHODA! I HOPE GRENDLE APPRECIATES IT WHEN HE WAKES UP!
AND SO, THROUGH HIS SOLVING OF THE RIDDLE OF THE MISSING HOUR, BLACKSTONE, THE MAGICIAN-DETECTIVE, BRINGS AN END TO THE SHORT BUT VICIOUS CAREER OF THE NOTORIOUS CRIMINAL--- THE ORCHID!

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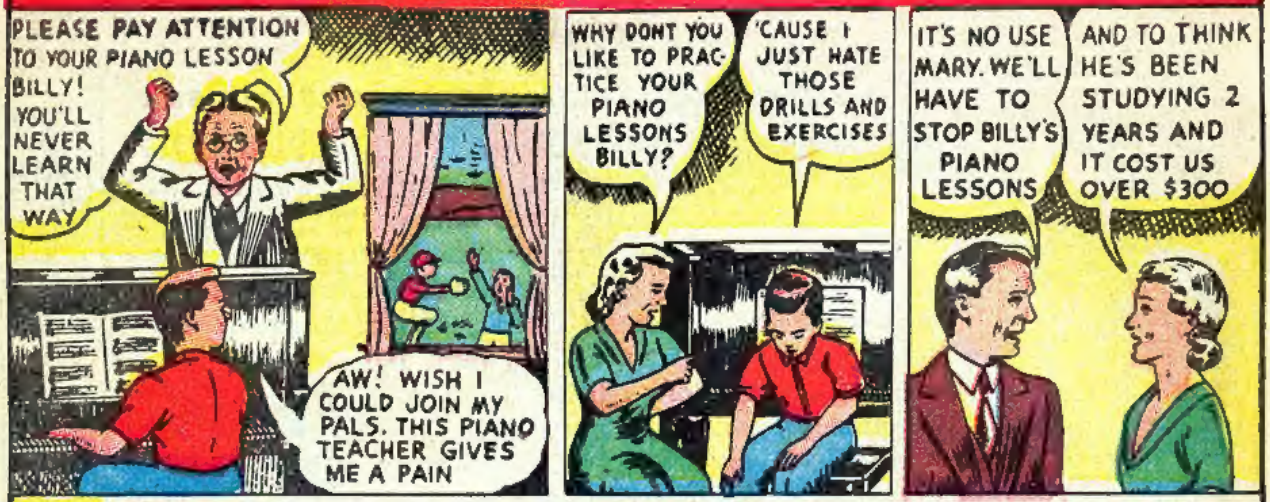
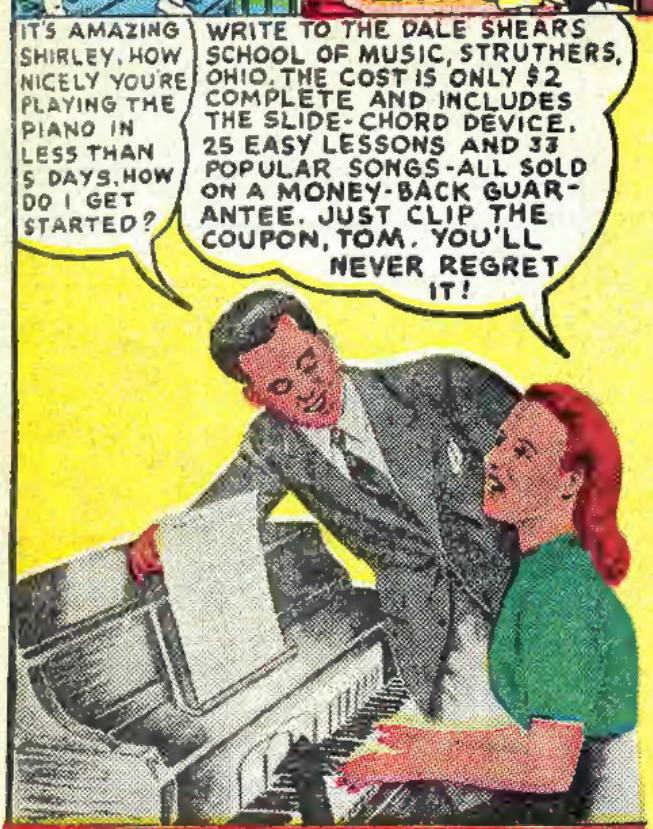

PLEASE PAY ATTENTION TO YOUR PIANO LESSON BILLY! YOU'LL NEVER LEARN THAT WAY
AW! WISH I COULD JOIN MY PALS. THIS PIANO TEACHER GIVES ME A PAIN
WHY DONT YOU LIKE TO PRACTICE YOUR PIANO LESSONS BILLY?
'CAUSE I JUST HATE THOSE DRILLS AND EXERCISES
IT'S NO USE MARY. WE'LL HAVE TO STOP BILLY'S PIANO LESSONS
AND TO THINK HE'S BEEN STUDYING 2 YEARS AND IT COST US OVER $300

NOW'S MY CHANCE TO SKIP OUT AND JOIN THE GANG AT THE SODA PARLOR. HOPE MOM DONT GET WISE
AT JONES' SODA PARLOR
GOLLY...LOOK HOW BOBBY'S MAKING A HIT WITH HIS PIANO PLAYING..AND HE COULDN'T PLAY A TUNE LAST WEEK
HOW'D YOU LEARN TO PLAY PIANO SO WELL AND SO FAST.. BOBBY
IT'S A CINCH BILLY. WITH A SLIDE-CHORD DEVICE ANYONE CAN LEARN TO PLAY IN A JIFFY
IMAGINE DEAR, HOW MUCH MONEY WE COULD HAVE SAVED IF BILLY HAD KNOWN OF THAT SLIDE-CHORD DEVICE
AND HE WOULD HAVE PLAYED SO NICELY 2 YEARS AGO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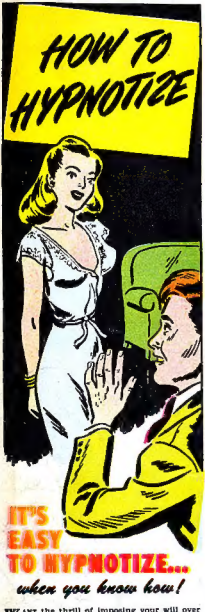

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